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Portraits from EL SALVADOR

The Editors
PACs VOBISCUM

ONE DOLLAR

MAY 8, 1981

Beyond Reagan's budget
EUGENE J. McCARTHY

Rx for nuclear warfare
J. BRYAN HEHIR

The pain in Spain remains
BENJAMIN MARTIN

Garry Wills's 'Federalist'
A.J. BEITZINGER

Conservative visions, American realities

NOTES ON THE NEW RIGHT Fred Siegel

REAGAN REPUBLICANISM [illegible] McWilliams

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Correspondence

'La Matanza'

Columbus, Ohio

To the Editors: The Reagan administration has talked loudly about "international terrorism" and "USSR interference" in El Salvador [Editorial, Mar. 13]. But they have just increased their military aid to the ruling junta of that country by $23,000,000 of "lethal military assistance" and more than doubled their acknowledged military advisors.

El Salvador has an illiteracy rate of 58 percent (95 percent in the rural areas) and an infant mortality rate of 58.3 percent per 1,000 — four times that of the United States. Seventy-five percent of all Salvadoran children under the age of five are malnourished. Fourteen families on whose behalf the military has ruled for over five decades own almost all of the productive land, thereby controlling 60 percent of sugar cane exports, 75 percent of cotton, and 85 percent of coffee. The percentage of members of the rural labor force owning land is 10 percent and is among the very lowest in the world.

Thirty thousand farmers, reformers, and intellectuals who protested against these conditions were murdered by the army in 1932, a period in their history that Salvadorans call *La Matanza*, The Slaughter.

And the slaughter continues. In the last fourteen months over fifteen thousand people have been killed. The great majority were landless farm workers and their families, teachers, students, labor organizers, priests, nuns, lay missionaries, and others marked for death either by the right-wing para-military forces or by uniformed soldiers and police.

Once again we are supporting the wrong side.

JAMES CHRISTOFF

Celebrity intellectual

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Editor: Susan Sontag is our official celebrity "intellectual," surfacing periodically, as in your recent reverential interview [Feb. 13], like a highbrow Joyce Brothers, to babble about assorted cultural matters. While she may hold some interest as a cultist, granting permission to repressed intellectuals to enjoy the Supremes and Bruce Springsteen, she certainly can't be taken seriously as an artist.

Her whole career has been that of a dilettante, with her fiction consisting of imitation Borges and her film critiques reading like ersatz Kael. She certainly has been prolific in her mediocrity, though. . . .

As a critic her main purpose always seemed to be to reduce intellectualism to a private club. *Against Interpretation*, the title of one of her collections, seems to sum up her approach to the craft itself; with logic and dramatic sense becoming extra baggage she finds irrelevant to modern criticism. It would therefore be futile to ask her why, according to her reckoning, the work of Yourcenar or Gadda is superior to most modern artists or Genet's "The Balcony" is the best play since World War II. If we were, in reference to the play, to introduce the names of Inge, Beckett, O'Neill or Pinter, to challenge her opinion, it would be merely clouding the issue by refusing to abide by her rules of intellectual gamesmanship. . . .

Sontag defensively claims she can discuss popular culture with anybody, a fact I find hard to believe, since her stunted world seems to be defined by the boundaries of the *Partisan Review* and *The New York Review of Books*. This limited view helps to explain why Sontag's brand of intellectual is so creatively impotent and out of touch with reality.

DAN O'NEILL

Lost social teachings

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: David O'Brien's good letter [Feb. 13] calling for a deeper awareness of social responsibility may be seconded, I believe, with a discussion of one remark of his, "Until our church begins to understand that the central teaching of the worth and the dignity of the human person integrates all of Christian life . . ."

The truth is that the church, in the persons of her leaders, understands this very well; it is now up to her members generally to learn it. What O'Brien quoted is a rather weak, static version of what had earlier been presented in a more dramatic and dynamic form, but is now almost lost.

"The origin and primary goal of social life is the safeguarding, development and perfection of the human person . . ." This was the basic statement, presented by Pius XII in his Christmas address of 1942. Here "social life" meant community life of any sort, whether the community happened to be political, social, economic or what not.

We must strive for the recognition of each person's dignity; we must also work for his development, and this can be facilitated through community life. For the best commentary on this statement, we can look to the work of Gustav Gundlach, S.J., who must have participated in its drafting. To support this remark, there is as external evidence the claim of O.V. Nell-Breuning, S.J.; for internal evidence we have the published writings of Gundlach himself in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Stressing the personal development aspect of group life, Gundlach wrote as early as 1930 that "Every worker needs a group, no matter how small, wherein he can exercise personal responsibility," and through this exercise, he finds growth.

Biblical studies have progressed dramatically in our day; a large part of this progress has been due to a revived

(Continued on page 286)

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PACs ON BOTH THE HOUSES

THE PHENOMENAL GROWTH of political action committees continues. Perhaps the most detailed study of them was done in post-election articles by Morton Mintz of the *Washington Post*, in one of which he disclosed that the leading one hundred PACs collected $75 million to influence races for federal office in 1979 and 1980. In the last three weeks before the election, PACs poured in $10 million, mostly in connection with House and Senate races — fourteen percent of the $73 million-plus they had spent over a two-year period. Reports filed with the Federal Election Commission disclosed that the top one hundred PACs accounted for about sixty percent of all the money raised and spent by the more than seventeen hundred non-party units. The grand total the PACs took in was more than $127 million, up $50 million from receipts in 1977-78.

Included in the top one hundred PACs were sixteen sponsored by trade associations, which spent a little over $10 million, and those of thirteen corporations, which spent over $4 million, including nearly $800,000 by three major defense contractors. PACs of thirty-three union organizations spent $18.8 million. Ten health-related units laid out $6.2 million. However, the three top-ranking PACs were non-party conservative or right-wing units. These three alone accounted for nearly one-quarter of the top one hundred's receipts and expenditures. The combined income of these three right-wing units was $18 million, their outlays $16.8 million.

Top-spender among the leading right-wing groups was the National Conservative Political Action Committee which raised and spent more than $7 million on favorite candidates. Second was the Congressional Club, which began as a fund-raising unit for the far-right Senator Jesse Helms (R.-N.C.) and which spent $6.6 million. In third place, with spending of $3 million plus, was the Fund for a Conservative Majority. Furthermore, the top one hundred PACs included eight other right-wing units that took in and spent almost another $6 million. This meant that conservative/right-wing PACs accounted for thirty-two percent of all dollar receipts and thirty percent of spending. No wonder so many liberal and moderate candidates bit the dust in the 1980 elections.

Who is behind some of the other PACs? Two pro-gun PACs are more or less typical; they raised $2.4 million and spent $2.2 million — which made their receipts fourteen times those of the PAC of Handgun Control Inc., which managed to raise only $168,267, not enough to put it into the top one hundred. The American Medical Association is big on PACs, as might be expected; they spent almost $5 million, with more than twice as much going to Republicans as to Democrats. Political action committees related to the oil and gas industry spent $6 million on House and Senate races last year, according to the National Committee for an Effective Congress. Biggest spender among the labor unions was the United Automobile Workers, which laid out $2 million. Overall, corporate, trade association, and rightist PACs

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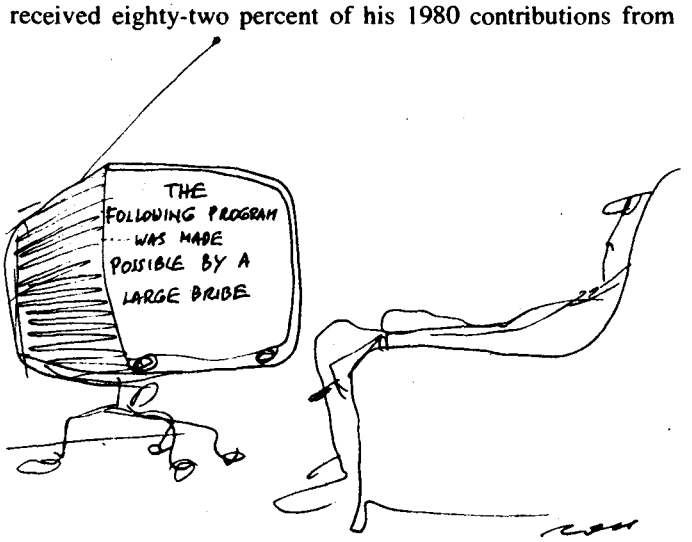
outspent labor PACs by a margin of roughly five-to-one.

The importance of PACs to candidates continues to escalate. In four critical Senate contests, conservative Republican candidates received more than $100,000 each from oil and gas PACs alone; all unseated their incumbent opponents, Senator John Culver of Iowa, Senator Frank Church of Idaho, Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, and Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana. In the races of twenty-seven Senate hopefuls studied by Mr. Mintz, one-fifth of all campaign contributions came from PACs. This compares with fifteen percent in 1976 and thirteen percent in 1978. But even these figures do not begin to tell the whole story for many individual candidates. Republican candidate Mark Andrews of North Dakota, for example, got fifty-eight percent of his total contributions from PACs. Democratic incumbent Senator Thomas F. Eagleton of Missouri received fifty-two percent of his contributions from PACs. Democrat John A. Durkin of New Hampshire received fifty percent of his campaign spending from PACs. Andrews was elected, defeating Senator McGovern, Eagleton reelected, and Durkin defeated. Ten others in the race for the Senate got between one-third and one-half of their contributions from PACs.

Not counted in such sums are the large so-called "independent expenditures" made for or against candidates by groups unconnected with them. Many of the liberals who went down to defeat the last time around, such as Senators Church and McGovern, were the targets for the negative campaigning of right-wing groups which had no ostensible connection with their conservative opponents but which waged often vicious campaigns nonetheless.

PACs will sometimes give to candidates of both parties, but they like to focus their giving. Heavy recipients of PAC largesse in 1980 were most of the members of the House Ways and Means Committee and of the Senate Finance Committee. These groups are crucial in Washington, with jurisdiction over all taxes and perhaps one-third of all federal spending. Such candidates received thirty-four percent of their total campaign receipts for the first nine months of 1980 from PACs. Representative Richard A. Gephardt (D.-Mo.) of Ways and Means received eighty-two percent of his 1980 contributions from PACs, including $7,250 from health-related PACs; he led the floor fight that defeated a bill opposed by the industry to restrict rising hospital costs. Not every candidate who received PAC money will vote the way his donors want, of course, and Congressman Gephardt might have fought against restricting hospital costs without any PAC contributions. Nonetheless, the pressure is undeniably there. As one Congressman who chose not to run for reelection said, "Every campaign contribution carries some sort of lien which is an encumbrance on the legislative process."



Worry over the role of the PACs is mounting with their increase. Last year there was a bipartisan effort in the House to stop the political action committees from becoming the dominant source of campaign spending. The result was a bill prohibiting a House candidate from accepting more than a total of $70,000 from all PACs in any election and more than $6000 from any single PAC in the primary and general election combined. The bill passed in the House but died in the Senate under threat of a filibuster raised mainly by conservative Republicans. This result assured an unrestricted flow of PAC dollars to Republican House candidates in the last election and avoided an awkward double standard for PAC financing — new limits for the House but not for the Senate. But political experts interviewed by the *Post* said that those who blocked the bill accomplished something larger: assuring GOP candidates enough cash to give them a good chance of capturing the House in 1982, thus giving the Republicans control of the House, Senate, and presidency at one time.

In the light of how badly they have been hurt by PACs in the past and the prospects for 1982 and beyond, it's no wonder that the Democrats are worried. Of twenty senators on the 1982 hit list of the National Conservative Political Action Committee, seventeen are Democratic, three Republican. As a result, former Vice President Walter Mondale and Senator Edward Kennedy are already setting up their own political action committees to raise funds for Democratic candidates, apparently on the principle of joining them if you can't beat them. But more than Democrats should be worried about the mushroom-like growth of the PACs. Some PACs are broadly based in structure, but many are not; corporate PACs are multiplying at the fastest rate, and too many PACs are narrowly focused and seem to suggest a quid-pro-quo operation.

What, if anything, to do about the PACs? A major step in deemphasizing such campaign financing would be to introduce public financing of congressional races like that in the presidential contest. At the moment this solution seems politically impossible, so the PACs will continue to pose a major problem, and one for which there is no simple solution, since unwise restrictions on political action committees could constitute interference with free speech and the public's right to participate in the political process. It is good, therefore, that the Supreme Court has agreed to decide whether Congress can constitutionally limit expenditures by the so-called "independent political committees" which in the 1980 election spent millions of dollars on behalf of Ronald Reagan beyond the limits set by the Federal Election Commission. These

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committees are only part of the PAC problem, but perhaps the reasoning to be enunciated by the justices will provide some clues in the larger over-all problem of proliferating PACs.

Washington comment

BEYOND THE BUDGET

MORALS & ECONOMIC RECOVERY

NOT SURPRISINGLY, economists are in disagreement over what effects the Reagan tax and budget-cutting programs will have if adopted and put into practice. Most of the economists agree that for a variety of reasons, some of them not directly related to the Reagan program, consumer prices will rise less rapidly in 1981 than they did in 1980.

Beyond this one point of agreement, confusion reigns.

The economists who are really on the spot are those now popularly labeled "supply siders." These are the economists whom President Reagan credits with having provided the theoretical foundations for his economic program. There can be no quarrel with their first principle: that if the supply of goods and services is increased significantly, some other things being held more or less as they are, the general economic picture would be improved. The two nagging doubts, to put the matter gently, are over the effect of the program on unemployment and also on inflation.

Reduced taxes for those, individuals and corporations, who consequently will have more money to invest, should stimulate production. However, tight money and high interest rates are counter forces. Reducing the federal budget expenditures should be anti-inflationary; but increasing the defense expenditures within the limits of an overall smaller budget could create inflationary pressures stronger than those which would be created even by the possibly wasteful non-military expenditures that the administration wants cut out of the budget. The fat in the defense budget (or, for that matter, in the non-defense budget) is, as a rule, less inflationary than the lean in the defense budget. The latter expenditures not only release consumer purchasing power without producing goods to absorb that power, but also compete with the civilian economy for scarce materials and scarce skilled labor.

The Reagan tax program will provide incentives as well as additional funds, for saving and investing—that is, for persons in the high-income brackets and for corporations. If one assumes that the additional money made available through tax cuts to persons and corporations is actually invested, there remains a question as to whether it will be invested constructively. Most of the money will be handled through some corporate structure, possibly through several—financial, managerial, or industrial. By charter the corporation is not a fully moral and socially responsible institution. The corporate charter usually is centered on organizing an entity which has as its purpose getting, within the limits of the law, the largest financial return for stockholders, and incidentally for corporate officers. The institutional limitations on corporate conscience and social responsibility will mark what is done with available investment funds. The most profitable place for investment in the next two or three years, may not be in productive enterprises, in retooling or in rebuilding plants, but it may be buying up sound, effective, operating companies, not to improve their efficiency, but to skim off financial gains, through recapitalizations, sale of properties, or other actions, which may not only be non-productive but even counter-productive, wasteful, and inflationary.

THE POSITIVE forces for desirable economic changes may not be the Reagan tax program or the attention-gathering budget proposals at all. They may spring from other sources. Some economic, at least indirectly, and the others moral.

Some of the economic forces are already at work, others may be released through reduced government regulations and government protection. Too many American businesses and industries have been overprotected by the government, while others have been protected by their own economic positions, monopolistic in a formal sense, as in the case of financial organizations, or monopolistic by virtue of production costs and economic conditions, as in the cases of the American automobile industry, the United States steel industry, and the oil companies. The automobile industry is the clearest example. For years, the industry controlled its own market, and General Motors, by carrying Ford and Chrysler, controlled the supply to fit its own created demand.

Foreign competition is finally forcing a change. Wage freezes and reduced benefits have been accepted by the employees at Chrysler, similar action is most likely to come next at Ford and, eventually, at General Motors, in keeping with the Charlie Wilson principle that "What is good for the United States is good for General Motors, or vice versa."

The moral forces are less evident although there have been promising signs going back to the consumer revolts of the sixties, manifest first and most clearly in the turning to small cars, and then especially, in the actions of the young people, with their preference for simple blue jeans as the clear example. This latter sign and reality has been pre-empted and corrupted by the designers, but it was a good and encouraging thing while it lasted.

We continue to be the most over-transported, over-heated, over-cooled, over-fed (most of us), over-housed (many of us), over-defended (all of us), and over-advertised people the world has ever known. We have gone far beyond poor Thorstein Veblen.

If significant change is to take place in the United States, the motivation of the American people will have to be something more more powerful and more basic than that offered by the Reagan tax and spending policies. We need a revolution of moderating expectations, a change of spirit, leading to a sharing of work, of resources, not only with our contemporaries,

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but with some thought to future generations. We need to confront, and accept, a challenge not unlike that which John Adams laid down to the American colonists as a cost to them of the Revolution and of separation from England. Adams said, "We must change our habits, our prejudices, our palates, our taste in dress, furniture, equipage, architecture, etc. . . . But we can live and be happy."

EUGENE J. McCARTHY

(Eugene J. McCarthy is the former senator from Minnesota and candidate for the U.S. presidency.)

The budget

LEGAL DISSERVICE

ANOTHER HOLE IN THE 'SAFETY NET'

THE REAGAN BUDGET axe, designed to chop off some social service limbs elsewhere, proposes to completely decapitate the Legal Services Corporation, a quasi-governmental body that spends approximately $320 million per year to fund legal services for the poor. The reasons, provable and surmisable, for this Draconian proposal tell us much about the "non-political" nature of the administration's fiscal decisions and should serve to remind us of a few political truths as well. First, it is clear that Ronald Reagan simply does not like publicly financed legal services; indeed, after his experience with one such agency, California Rural Legal Assistance, during his gubernatorial years, it is safe to say that he detests the idea that tax monies can be used to finance litigation against government agencies. Reagan, like most politicians, has a long memory, and hatred is as much a political motivator as are other, disinterested motives. Destroying Legal Services—actually an old Reagan sore point, shared by Richard M. Nixon—is clearly a political, not financial, decision, since there is no evidence that the "unworthy" or the "unneedy" are systematically cheating their way into the system.

Politics is, of course, filled with ironies; and the evisceration of Legal Services would be a good—though especially nasty—example. Reagan professes to be anti-government and believes that it over-regulates and is insensitive to the needs of those regulated. Insofar as Legal Services pursues class actions against government to prevent arbitrary or discriminatory (and of course illegal or unconstitutional) treatment of the poor by the bureaucracies that govern their lives, it would seem to fulfill this apparent Reaganite goal. Of course, the president's desire to "get government off our backs" does not really mean "off *all* our backs," just the backs of those with expensive, well-tailored jackets. Incidentally, the elderly—allegedly to be protected from the severities of the axe—will also suffer with the "less deserving," since almost two hundred thousand of them used the Legal Services Corporation last year.

Contrary to Reagan's memory and the harsh rhetoric of some defenders of his proposal, Legal Services these days differs drastically from its late-1960s counterpart. The Corporation does not litigate; rather, ninety-five percent of its monies finance some three hundred programs with over one thousand offices throughout the country. About thirty percent of the matters handled by the six thousand attorneys involved in these programs present mundane family dispute problems; almost twenty percent involve housing complaints, usually, of course, against landlords; almost twenty percent of the matters consist of income maintenance claims, and about fifteen percent consumer and finance problems. Few of these matters, over a million in number, end up in litigation, and very few in litigation against government agencies. Memory can be tricky.

The stark simple fact is that there are twenty million or more poor people in this country and many more than that who are marginally above the poverty line; other Reagan proposals will doubtlessly swell the figures. The Legal Services Corporation cannot be accused of contributing to whatever crime problem the poor present, since it does not deal with criminal matters. It does provide vital (and irreplaceable) funding for local agencies handling civil matters: one-third of the budget of New York City's Legal Aid Society's civil division comes from the Corporation ($1.4 million), and, in New York State, last year, the Corporation spent $22 million so that a hundred thousand civil matters could be handled. It is doubtful that significant monies to support a vital, necessary, and highly symbolic program of assuring justice to the poor (or to at least the five percent of the poor who even seek legal aid) will receive a high priority in any bloc grant distributions, at least in many states (many of the poor don't vote). By all accounts, the program is successful and low cost, factors which, in the eyes of the administration, may militate as much against it as in its favor.

The image of the "safety net" is an intriguing one; it presupposes that one has climbed a ladder or used some other means to perch above a dangerous area. The abolition of federally funded legal services would not only be a hole in the safety net; it would simply take away a ladder—albeit not an income maintenance one—from even those groups allegedly

"OF COURSE THE LEGAL SYSTEM IS FOR POOR FOLKS. WHENEVER YOU'RE GUILTY OF SOMETHING WE'LL COME LOOKING FOR YOU!"

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"deserving" by the administration's rather arbitrary standards. The ladder of legal representation is critical in our society, for the machinery surrounding the poor's simplest needs is cumbersome and awesome, especially to those unskilled, uneducated, and untrained in the arts of bureaucracy manipulation. Also, while it must be acknowledged that there are decent landlords, merchants, and bankers, the temptation to insure that "The Poor Pay More" (one of those sixties phrases that now seems forgotten) still lingers and can only be tamed by the threat (if rarely the reality) of litigation.

The Constitution promises to "insure justice;" but now even rudimentary legal justice for the poor, itself a foundation of whatever social stability we have, is at risk. If anything cannot be, should not be, and need not be rationed, it is Justice.

ISIDORE SILVER

(Isidore Silver teaches constitutional law and history at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.)

After the coup

THE PAIN IN SPAIN

DEMOCRACY, YES—OF A SORT

SPAIN'S ABORTIVE MILITARY putsch of last February was the political price that sooner or later had to be paid for that nation's tranquil return to popular rule. The smooth passage from authoritarianism to parliamentary democracy had been constructed on a felicitous compromise between two disparate political forces, the politicians who had loyally served Franco and the parties and individuals that had long fought the dictatorship from clandestinity. Not only were certain traditionally divisive issues avoided or glossed over in drafting the new constitution, but the government bureaucracy and many of the institutions inherited from the Franco era were left virtually intact. However necessary this may have been in assuring the success of the initial phase of the transition, it planted the seeds for future difficulties. As the dismantling of the authoritarian infrastructure proceeded, the chances grew for a jarring clash between the nascent democratic institutions and the forces of retrogression.

Few in Spain doubted that the military and the police (the latter operate as a paramilitary force largely under the direction of the military) would be the most troublesome obstacles to consolidating democracy. To avoid the slightest provocation the entire political establishment, from the conservative right to the Communists, have handled them with kid gloves. Military plotters who heretofore conspired to overthrow the government were treated by authorities of that government with a forbearance that bordered on the masochistic. The passage of time, it was hoped, would bring about a reconciliation with the norms of a democratizing society. And if things threatened to get out of hand, there was always King Juan Carlos, the commander-in-chief to whom the generals had sworn loyalty, the ultimate bulwark against the re-establishment of a military dictatorship.

Unavoidably, therefore, the architects of the new Spain found it necessary to engage in a risky gamble; that time and circumstance would succeed in overcoming ingrained institutional habits and traditions. It was extremely chancy, for the armed forces have long exercised an intrusive presence in Spanish political affairs. Spaniards have lived more years under military dictatorships in this century than under civilian rule.

It is not hard to see why the armed forces and the police, unlike most sectors of Spanish society, have found it difficult to adapt to the new democratic framework. Both had enjoyed a privileged status under Francoism and deeply imbibed its ideology. After all it had been a regime whose legitimacy rested on military power and police repression. To voluntarily confine itself now to the much more limited role usually accorded the military in western democratic societies and to accept a subordination to civilian authority would require a wrenching break with traditional Spanish military doctrine. It would also signify the surrender by this bloated officers corps of the autonomous role it has long possessed in national affairs.

Another important factor in the military's growing disenchantment has been the recent lackluster performance of the center-right government of Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez. The past year has been marked by economic stagnation, political fumbles, a decline in government authority, a steady loss of popular support, and the appearance of divisive internal quarrels within the governing Union of the Democratic Center party (UCD). The decline in UCD fortunes has increased the chances for the Socialist Workers party (PSOE) to emerge as the country's largest parliamentary group at the next national elections (due to be held in 1983, if the present government can last that long). The growing possibility that Socialist leader Felipe Gonzalez may be the next prime minister is a prospect highly displeasing to military rightists.

Certainly the greatest detonator of military dissatisfaction has been the government's handling of the extremely difficult Basque problem and its seeming inability to halt the ETA guerrillas' ceaseless murders of policemen and army officers. The granting of home rule to the Basques is looked upon as a dismemberment of the Spanish state and indignation is at a boiling point over the terrorist assassinations.

Supported by most parties, the government has endeavored to deprive the separatist guerrillas of their popular following by a gradual transfer of powers to the recently constituted Basque regional governments. The difficulty is that the police have been unsuccessful in preventing the terrorist killings and have themselves been responsible for actions undercutting the efforts of the Madrid authorities and Basque moderates. Still, over the longer run this is a policy that offers the best hopes for ultimately bringing pacification to the violence-torn Basque provinces.

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It is to counter this policy that the ETA-military has purposely singled out policemen and army officers as their assassination targets in conformity with a strategy designed to force the government to resort to hard-line policies by acceding to military demands calling for the declaration of martial law and responsibility for maintaining public order. To do so would signify a return to the repressive tactics of the past and to forfeit the painfully difficult progress accomplished thus far in reaching a modus vivendi with Basque nationalism; it would also go far toward aiding ETA in attaining its objective of securing popular support through the promotion of a climate of repression and polarization.

The events of February 23 demonstrated that the generals are perfectly capable of concocting a military takeover with audacity, guile, and technical expertise. On that level they came very close to succeeding. A relatively small number of military and police personnel actively collaborated in the abortive conspiracy; but they count on the sympathy of a large majority of the officer corps. A telling indication of the size of that support can be gained from the fact that not one of the various military and police intelligence services alerted government authorities that a coup attempt was going to take place.

To be sure, the political myopia of the putschists was appalling. The coup took place without the support of a single responsible political group or personality. What little civilian support it managed to scrape together came from inconsequential neofascist groups. The essential components of traditional Spanish society — the entire political establishment, the business and banking communities, and the church — were unanimous in their opposition to a military takeover. Those facts provide the background for former Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez's description of the putsch as a "lunatic action."

Equally dismal would have been the international consequences. Once more the country would have found itself relegated to the role of outcast to which it had been consigned during much of the Franco era. The long-sought membership in the European Economic Community would have had to be abandoned for an indeterminate future, a rebuff with potentially extremely grave consequences for a Spanish economy heavily dependent on foreign trade and outside capital investments and technology. In any event, the life span of a successful military regime would have been brief, the victim of gradual asphyxiation from domestic resistance and a probable international quarantine.

Raymond Carr, the noted British historian, has recently observed that objective realities have "condemned" Spain to stay democratic. The crucial question then is, just what sort of democracy? Obviously it is premature to hazard an adequate judgment at this time. But it is clear that for the present the democratic process has suffered grievous damage. Spain's parliamentary institutions have been humiliated and found vulnerable to power plays by military conspirators.

Since it was King Juan Carlos's resolute opposition to the putsch that proved so decisive in assuring its failure, the King now finds his influence over the military appreciably diminished. Furthermore, the always delicate balance between civilian and military authority has now perceptibly tipped in favor of the latter. Though the army has been shown politically incapable of establishing a viable military dictatorship, a cowed, subdued parliament has been forced to placate the rogue elephant to avert another rampage.

The military have emerged with an increased ability to impose their views upon the civilian establishment. The parliament conducts its business these days with frequent uneasy glances over the shoulder to observe the military reaction. At such a time of institutional crisis, the constitution of a government of national unity embracing all major parliamentary groups would seem to have been most desirable. But fearful of military disapproval of the inclusion of Socialists in the government (they are, after all the country's second largest party), Prime Minister Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo has cautiously chosen to maintain the monocolor UCD government, even though it is regarded as a weak regime and without a parliamentary majority.

Since February 23, ETA has intensified its campaign of military assassinations. To assuage the armed forces' reactions, the government has granted them enlarged responsibilities in policing the Basque region, a move that could eventually lead to an even greater involvement. It is such a prospect and its implications that have alarmed the Basque moderates and drawn the criticism of the three bishops of the area.

The mood in liberal and left political circles is one of pessimism and deep concern. Will the price to be paid for the elimination of the terrorist plague prove excessive? Many Spaniards feel that the fate of the country's democratic system is slipping out of their hands and could be very well decided by democracy's most redoubtable enemies.

For the time being, at least, the Socialist and Communists have been deprived of their normal oppositional roles and of their substantive functions in post-coup political affairs. The chances in the immediate future for a repeated coup attempt seem to have receded, but the principal concern is that while the parliamentary system is likely to survive, its authority and independence are being steadily eroded under the intrusive pressures of the military. Democracy may have survived but there is much talk in Madrid these days that Spain is in for a spell of *"democracia vigilada"* — a supervised democracy.

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Church/worldwatch

Doctors of the world unite!

J. Bryan Hehir

IN THE EARLY stages of the SALT II debate, columnist George F. Will wrote: "It is said that since the summer of 1945, the world has lived 'in the shadow of the bomb.' But the shadow is, of course, metaphorical, and the assumption that mankind has been weighed down by thoughts of nuclear weapons is false. Such weapons are part of the wallpaper of the age, unnoticed, and, to almost everybody, uninteresting." The significance of the observation lies in the contrast it highlights between our psychic accommodation to the danger of nuclear weapons, and the escalating political possibility of their use in this century. The danger is a product of new weapons systems (ever larger and more accurate) combined with the now revived idea of the rational possibility of limited nuclear war.

This ominous background makes all the more interesting the appearance of a new organization, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which held its first international conference at Airlie, Virginia, from March 20-25. The organization bears the names of some of the leading figures in U.S. and Soviet medicine, as well as physicians from Japan who have participated in the studies of long-term consequences affecting the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The co-chairmen, Dr. Bernard Lown of Harvard and Dr. Eugene Chazov of the Soviet Academy of Science, have both worked on the joint U.S.-USSR studies on cardiology initiated in the heydays of détente. Détente has come upon bad times politically, but the physicians appear convinced that war and politics are too important for health to be left to shifting political winds.

When exposed to the data presented at the conference, it is not difficult to understand the determination of the doctors to continue dialogue in spite of an unfavorable political climate. Their approach is based on the conviction that nuclear war is the number-one health hazard today (it was compared to the Black Plague), and the only remedy is preventive medicine. The physicians are specifically determined to discredit any idea in the public mind that the medical effects of a nuclear exchange could be treated. They have done their homework assiduously, as the caliber of the papers at the conference proved, and they have concluded that "limited nuclear war" from a medical viewpoint is an absurdity.

The strength of the physicians' case lies in its specificity. They do not intend to engage the entire range of war and peace issues, nor even to dispute the arcane details of the strategic debate. They are careful to have background material on the arms race, but they focus precisely and powerfully on its potential medical consequences. In a recent article in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Dr. Lown and his American colleagues recalled the conclusions of studies done in 1962: "They estimated that the blast, fire storms, and acute ionizing radiation from detonation of only two nuclear weapons would kill 1,052,000 people out of a Greater Boston population of three million. Of those surviving the immediate explosion, approximately one million would die from the injuries that they received. . . . If each physician spent only ten minutes on the diagnosis and treatment of each victim and worked for twenty hours a day, it would take fourteen days for every injured person to be seen for the first time." These calculations were updated in great detail during the conference by a powerful blend of scientific studies, films, and slide shows, ranging from films taken at Hiroshima and Nagasaki hours after the cities were bombed to calculations of how many severe burns could be treated if an American city suffered a nuclear attack today.

Medical specificity makes three contributions to the public understanding of the arms race. The first is psychological: the physicians cut through the sanitized statistics and language of strategic theorists and contrast them, in frightening detail, with descriptions of what the human body is like after a nuclear attack. By concretizing the meaning of a nuclear exchange, the physicians make a psychological point with political consequences. At the heart of the nuclear debate today is an old issue with new life: whether nuclear weapons exist exclusively for deterrence or whether they have other rationally justifiable uses. From this question comes the debate about extended deterrence and limited nuclear strikes. The doctors refuse to be counted among those who are trying to convince the public that limited and nuclear are compatible adjectives for discussing warfare today. Their approach is precise and appropriately clinical. They cannot be dismissed since they speak about an aspect of the nuclear debate where the strategists and the statesmen are laymen.

The psychological contribution is matched by a political one. Soviet and American physicians are in serious dialogue at a moment when discussions in other areas are in abeyance. On this very point, however, the conference came under fire. Stephen S. Rosenfeld of the *Washington Post* judged it a tactical mistake for U.S. physicians to join with their Soviet counterparts: "They should never have accepted Soviet doctors as 'non-political' soulmates. This invites all the shameless fraud of which Soviets are capable. . . . If the group wishes to be taken seriously, let it throw the Soviets out." Mr. Rosenfeld is, by any standard, a long way from the hard right of American politics; his advice, therefore, is significant as an indication

(Continued on page 286)

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INDIVIDUALS CAUGHT UP IN A SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Portraits from El Salvador

SEAN CRONIN

The coffee farmer: Brian Coughlin is a businessman and part-time coffee farmer in El Salvador. He went there thirty-three years ago from Massachusetts and married a Salvadoran. Two generations earlier the Coughlins had fled famine-struck Ireland. A tall, gray-haired, distinguished-looking man of about sixty-five, wearing summer suit, tie, pocket handkerchief, Mr. Coughlin points to the *fincas* (coffee farms) on the flanks of the hills around San Salvador, and in a gently modulated voice explains the political economy of his adopted country, which is based on coffee, cotton, and sugar.

"El Salvador has the highest production per acre in coffee — and in cotton," he says. "Coffee is the lifeblood of this country. Everything is done by hand. Hundreds of thousands are employed in coffee farming, perhaps a million, Eighty percent of our foreign earnings are from coffee. But world prices today are the worst in years. As the devil would have it, a root disease called *roya* (rust) attacked the coffee crop while the Communists and terrorists attacked the mills and farms.

"There's a surplus of coffee in the world. Brazil and Colombia are not interested in forming a coffee cartel to keep their coffee off the market until prices go up and thus help El Salvador, as the agrarian reform theorists imagine. Today the coffee farmers are dealing with bureaucrats who have taken over the mills and export houses under agrarian reform, and now they can tell you they won't buy from you or they will only buy fifty percent of your crop. Before, we had as many as twenty private mills to choose from and bargain with for a better price. Coffee farmers carry heavy interest on crop loans and are at the mercy of Incafé."

Incafé is the government coffee agency. Under phase one of the agrarian reform program the 263 largest estates — "the so-called oligarchy," as Mr. Coughlin puts it — were expropriated. They have been compensated with government bonds (ninety percent) and cash (ten percent) but have not, Mr. Coughlin says, received one cent yet. Their estates are now cooperatives, but since only about two percent of *campesinos* are functionally literate, these estates are run by government administrators and, according to Coughlin, are going downhill rapidly. The government and the U.S. embassy make contrary claims, and journalists are taken on tours regularly to show how agrarian reform is progressing. In this respect at least, El Salvador is like South Vietnam.

There are other similarities. The drafters of agrarian reform — one is Roy L. Prosterman, a University of Washington law professor, who performed a like function in South Vietnam — have devised a program that gives a couple of acres to sharecroppers. The reform will benefit, it is said, 125,000 families and create a small-farmer class that will be the backbone of a democratic El Salvador. It is called the "land to the tiller" and is referred to derisively as the "land to the killer" program, for obvious reasons. The junta decreed the transfer of title deeds to the sharecroppers. A successor junta could decree some other form of transfer. The situation is fluid; and men like Mr. Coughlin — who in this respect at least holds the same view as the left-wing opposition — say it is unreal, a hoax, and carries a "made in U.S.A." label.

The economy is collapsing, in the meantime. "Coffee is like wine," says Mr. Coughlin. "The higher on the hill the better the crop. El Salvador exports the champagne of coffee. The Germans pay a couple of cents a pound over the market price for it. But the quality that nature provides can be easily ruined if the fermenting process is not carefully controlled. People without a proprietary interest in the crop won't give it the proper care. I'm predicting now that the world-recognized quality of El Salvador's coffee will be lost in a short time.

"The people they expropriated were good farmers," Mr. Coughlin argues. "It was a political move. The Communists for years sought to win the *campesinos* with 'agrarian reform' on their banner. The Carter State Department decided to steal their thunder by invoking agrarian reform, and Duarte and Morales Ehrlich are pushing it. They say they are going to expropriate phase-two farmers this year, people who made it the hard way and have less general cultivation than the so-called oligarchy. They're talking about more than five thousand families. These owners are tough. They will fight. I wouldn't want to be an agronomist taking over phase-two farms."

José Napoleon Duarte, president of the civilian-military junta, and José Antonio Morales Ehrlich, member of the junta, are Christian Democrats. They control the civilian sector. The armed forces remain autonomous and under the control of the

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vice-president and military member of the junta, Col. Jaime Abdul Gutierrez Avendano, and the minister for defense and public security, Col. José Guillermo Garcia. Many people see Garcia as the strongman of the junta, not Duarte. Morales Ehrlich, who is responsible for agrarian reform, has one son fighting in the hills with the guerrillas, another a political prisoner. Mr. Coughlin considers that Duarte and Morales Ehrlich are working inside the government to carry out the same program that the "terrorists" are seeking on the outside. At best they have "minor ideological differences" with the Marxists.

The junta seems to have abandoned, for the time being anyway, any plan to expropriate the "phase-two farmers." The reasons are two-fold: first, these farmers would indeed fight to retain their farms and are responsible, it is thought, for the assassinations last January of the Salvadoran director of the program and his two U.S. advisers; second, the economy probably would collapse, since these people produce most of El Salvador's coffee and cotton and are efficient farmers.

Mr. Coughlin said cotton production is down forty percent from a year ago — the government, in revised figures, admits a drop of thirty-five percent — and coffee will fall over a three-year period. "You can't tell right away with coffee because it is a perennial crop." The government estimates that the fall in coffee production is about ten percent.

The villains of this scenario, for Brian Coughlin, are the "Marxists," a descriptive term that fits the guerrillas in the mountains; the political opposition now in exile; the terrorists of the left who set off bombs in the cities; the Spanish Jesuits who run the Catholic University, which was built for the children of the affluent with the money of the coffee farmers. Murdered Archbishop Romero was a political not a pastoral bishop, Mr. Coughlin maintains. He will not defend assassinations. But he will try to explain the killing of three American nuns and a lay missionary, Jean Donovan, last December 2. Salvadorans are courteous, he says, but there is a cruel streak in these people and they are mostly illiterate and besides "the nuns were not dressed as nuns — they were wearing jeans." He adds: "It's very questionable who killed them."

Missionaries and martyrs: Out at Zaragoza, where Jean Donovan and Sister Dorothy worked in a children's refugee center before they were murdered, you won't hear talk like that. Jean Donovan gave up a good job in Cleveland to give three years to the missions for a petty stipend. Aged twenty-seven, she was a laughing woman, "full of life, the soul of every party," with a fund of stories and songs. They won't soon forget her.

It's a Cleveland mission and people in Cleveland send money to keep the refugee center going. Caritas sends food parcels. A group of people in London who knew Jean Donovan also send money.

Father Ken Myers began the center with his own money. There are 225 refugees, all but 25 under the age of twelve. They play behind the Spanish colonial church in the hot sun. A boy of three grabs the priest's trousers. He has an Indian face and dark hair shooting straight up like a porcupine. Father Jim Kenny lifts him into the air and he cries with joy.

"We don't know how he got here," Father Kenny, a fifty-six-year old former Cleveland pastor, says. "We know nothing about him, or who his parents were, or where they are, or if they are alive."

Most of the children are parentless. Some saw their parents killed. They have severe psychological problems — but only at night, never in the daytime. They come from the mountains where the fighting is. Some had tried to flee with their families to Honduras when the military killed their parents. A boy of eleven with a baseball cap stood beside his mother when she died.

It is always the military: one rarely hears of killings by the guerrillas, except the story of the hacienda owner who was in his pool when the terrorists struck. His helicopter was parked nearby, but they cut him to pieces with machetes before he could get out of the pool. The blue water turned red. I heard that story three times. No doubt it's true.

Jean Donovan worked for the refugee center. She would drive north in the jeep to Chaletanango where the Maryknoll Sisters have a mission. She saved a twelve-year-old boy, who was near death from machete wounds; ferried him to a hospital and later to the refugee center, St. Joseph of the Mountain seminary in San Salvador. A helicopter tracked her, which may be why she, the two Maryknoll sisters, Ita Ford and Maura Clarke, and Sister Dorothy of the Cleveland mission were murdered last December 2, as they drove from San Salvador airport, along a lonely road, as night fell.

In Zaragoza no one has any doubt about the identity of their killers: Hacienda (or Treasury) police, patrolling the highway, armed with German-made G3 carbines, who took them to a barracks in Zacatoluca, "sexually humiliated" them (rape has not been established), then executed them by shooting them in the head. The bodies were taken to another place and buried in shallow graves. The jeep was driven off and burned. A priest went to the barracks next day to inquire about them and knew from the looks of the police that they had been murdered.

When the bodies were found, President Carter cut off aid to the junta. He sent an FBI team to investigate. They found excellent fingerprints on the partly burned jeep and gave them to the junta to check out. So far nothing has been done. "The

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case is still under investigation," President Duarte says when asked. Local people heard the four shots.

At the St. Joseph of the Mountain refugee center I met a twelve-year old boy who may have been the one Jean Donovan saved. He was with his sister, twenty-three, who had a baby at the breast. Her father, husband, and two brothers had been killed by the military. A great red mark covers the boy's neck where he was struck by a machete before he got away. "Why was your family killed?" I asked the woman through a Basque Jesuit. "Because my father was a good man," she replied. He had organized a *campesino* cooperative and they wiped out his family because of it.

There is a more horrifying story than that and it happened in Morazan, not Chaletanango. A priest took me to a house in San Salvador where a woman was hiding with her baby of four months, a boy, two, and a daughter, nine, recuperating from machete wounds. She was about to leave the country. Last June, her brother, his wife, and daughter were killed by the military. "The family had no politics," a Morazan priest told me. "If anything they were pro-military. But they were good Christians." The father protested the deaths to an army captain. The captain told him nothing like that would happen again. That night the military came and took the father, the woman, her other daughter, aged fourteen, to a wooded place. They killed the father, raped the woman, struck her with machetes, and left her for dead, then raped and killed the daughter. The woman struggled out of her grave, reached her home, took her two children with her and was helped by the church. She was eight months pregnant. She was smuggled to San Salvador, given medical care and recovered. This peasant woman who cannot understand why six members of her family were slaughtered is now in exile.

The president: José Napoleon Duarte, fifty-five, would not approve of such atrocities. Yet he presides over a government that in fact condones them. He does not control the security forces that carry them out. He is not entirely powerless for he has the support of the U.S. and disburses some of its economic aid. He is an honest man, as far as I could gather — like his colleague, Morales Ehrlich — in a very corrupt government.

I sat beside him at an informal press conference and in front of him at a formal one. He is a civil engineer, educated in America — at Notre Dame — and speaks good English. Two fingers of his left hand are missing. He has impassive Indian features. He is the nearest thing to a national figure El Salvador possesses. His former colleagues, now in exile, say he has an obsession for power — but it's the worst they can say about him.

When I learned the truth about the deaths of the four Americans, I sought an opportunity to draw an official reaction. People are very frightened to have their names used or to be quoted. A few days later Duarte came to the Camino Real Hotel to open a press center. Journalists gathered around, pushed microphones toward him, and asked questions. General Haig had made his statement that the four Americans may have been caught in crossfire. Duarte was asked about the case and gave the usual answer about its being under investigation. Then, perhaps to bolster Haig, he came up with something new.

"Why does the press accept the premise that they were killed by the security forces?" he asked. "Why not by the terrorists? They were killed by G3s and the terrorists are armed with G3s." The implication was that the security forces have other weapons.

"What weapons are the Hacienda police armed with?" I asked the president, leaning over his chair by his left ear. He paused for a moment but did not look up. "G3s," he replied, and said nothing more.

The editor: Jorge Pinto, editor and publisher of the respected San Salvador daily, *El Independiente*, is in exile in Mexico City with his wife and child, lucky to be alive. His paper is dead. Archbishop Romero was saying mass for his mother's anniversary when a sniper killed him. Last January the *Los Angeles Times* asked Pinto for an article and he was sending it via telex when the military came looking for him. He escaped to the Mexican embassy. The military went to his home and threatened to kidnap his three-year-old son. His wife pleaded with them and they left.

They took over his newspaper, blew up the machinery, and thereby suppressed a critic of the regime. His father was murdered by the military regime of Gen. Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez in 1943. Martinez killed thirty thousand peasants during a *campesino* rebellion in 1932. "To win democracy, we must defeat and break up the military," Jorge Pinto said.

Mr. Pinto knows that security forces, not right-wing terrorists, murdered Archbishop Romero, who was marked for death after denouncing Colonel Garcia and his "immoral command." Jorge Pinto also believes he is marked for death. Meanwhile, he awaits democracy in Mexico City.

'I'M SORRY WE DON'T HAVE BLINDFOLDS FOR YOU PEOPLE; AMERICAN OFFICIALS ARE WEARING THEM.'

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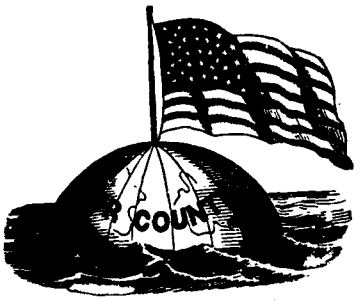

Notes on the New Right

FRED SIEGEL

A GREAT DEAL HAS already been written about the New Right. Whole books have been spent mapping out the ties between its various political organs and there has been an endless flow of breathless articles charting the ebb and flow of its power. There is a fascination with the political musculature of the New Right which isn't matched by a concern with what lies beneath the surface. Condescension, or outright hostility, has made it easy for reporters to evade the idea-feelings of the radically conservative. But they have been aided by a consensus that we already know what makes the New Right tick. Their articles are filled with signature phrases like "rage against the modern world" and an "inability to cope with the complexities of the twentieth century" that hark back to what turns out to be the source of the consensus, Richard Hofstadter's celebrated set of essays in *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, the last of which was written more than a decade and a half ago.

Hofstadter, you may recall, dispatched the Old Right off to cloud-cuckoo land. He argued that the right was primarily motivated by resentment or what he called status anxiety. Its long grouse against the twentieth century was, he suggested, part of the flawed provincial perspective of a native American Protestantism which had been unable to reconcile itself to the immigration, urbanization, and industrialization which had overtaken the nineteenth-century ideal of America. Moving deftly back and forth across two centuries of American history Hofstadter seemed to show that the effluvia emitted by McCarthyism was part of a deep-fibered psychological flaw in the American character. There was an unintended irony here. Hofstadter criticized the right for its belief that it was in possession of timeless truths which had been violated by a succession of evil conspiracies. In short, Hofstadter the historian indicted the right for being ahistorical. But Hofstadter's own critique shared the quality of what he was decrying. Borrowing his categories from Adorno's *The Authoritarian Personality*, he took the right out of its historical context and turned it into a psychological category which existed across time and space.

The unfortunate legacy of *The Paranoid Style* has been to make it unnecessary to look afresh at the ideas and emotions motivating the right. Hofstadter, unintentionally, dehumanized and depoliticized the debate between left and right. It is now legitimate to dismiss the new political currents as merely an updated version of the same old nativist quackery, by merely citing Hofstadter. That dismissal would not be nearly so dangerous if so many people who are *not* part of the New Right didn't share many of the same misgivings about the collapse of traditional American values and virtues. The notes that follow address that danger by updating Hofstadter's categories to sketch out the chains of political sentiment which link/divide the Old Right and the New, and the New Right and those who have drifted away from liberalism.

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1. From resentment to envy

RESENTMENT WAS the prime political emotion of the crabbed provincials of Hofstadter's text. Most recently their resentment was born of Depression-era failure. Briefly, by the 1920s the Republicans had governed the country for nearly seventy years and come to look upon themselves as the hereditary rulers of the land. Then came the Depression and the usurpation of their throne by an alien power. Until the late thirties the Republicans were frozen in shock by their fall from grace. They were like the victims of a natural disaster traumatized by watching their most familiar surroundings slide away. When they revived they were still shuddering from the winds of change and they consoled themselves by drawing upon a tradition of bizarre conspiracy theories to explain their wrongful loss of status. Diminished in place and prestige, the Old Right was ever on the defensive, reflexively throwing up its hands to ward off the next blow from the feds in Washington and the apostles of modernism in general. Overwhelmed and resentful, at best they wanted to be left free of federal "meddling" to run their towns, businesses, and

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workers in the manner to which they were accustomed.

Leave aside the fact that such an account ignores the very real policy issues which agitated the forties; can anyone recognize the New Right in that picture? In place of the small town hick alternatively cowering and snarling before his enemies, we have the hyper-aggressive Sun-Belt businessman and his companion, the new-wave, blown-dry Republican politico, who are sure they know what's best not only for themselves but for the whole country. In place of off-the-wall conspiracy theories, we have the economic models, fiscal hypotheses, and voting analyses of successful young intellectuals and politicians aiming to remake the country in the image of their business sponsors. Where the right was once fearful of being able to retain its own provincial privileges, it is now confidently looking to reshape the entire political system to serve its interests. In the immortal words of Richard Nixon, it wants the whole enchilada.

The New Right envies the way liberals have used the political system to serve their ends. This is part of a great political reversal. Traditionally, resentful conservatives looked to Congress as a guardian of local interests and a shield against the centralized intrusions of the presidency. But today conservatives criticize Congress as the province of the special interests and they look to a plebiscitary presidency as the vehicle of their conservative counter-New Deal. And therein lies the hidden meaning of Reagan's penultimate appeal to the nation in his acceptance speech. He quoted F.D.R. speaking as a fiscal conservative in 1932, but the words were less important than the image of F.D.R. as the author of a grand political transformation. Hence Reagan's following words: "The time is now, my fellow Americans, to recapture our destiny, to take it in our own hands."

2. *The dividing lines are different this time*

IN EUROPE CONSERVATISM was based on hereditary classes. In America conservatism is based on hereditary religious, ethnic, and racial groups. Nativism, the belief in the hereditary national proprietorship of Protestant America is no longer a driving force in our political life. The hostility toward the federal government and its political wards which was associated with conservative Protestants is now widely held throughout the white population. At the same time upper-middle and upper-class Protestants have increasingly moved into the Democratic party, the new vehicle for moralism, while the lower strata of all stripes are increasingly joined in a common resentment toward federal policy and its new ward, black America.

The harsh nativist lines of the old-stock-versus-new-stock conflict faded during the McCarthy era when anti-Communism provided a link between the previously warring groups. A decade later the Goldwater campaign of '64 was the final attempt by Protestant America to single-handedly reassert its pre-New Deal dominance. Goldwater, unwilling and unable to reach out beyond his core constituency, was smashed.

LBJ's victory was so overwhelming that many liberals including the normally astute Richard Rovere saw it as the end of conservatism in America. The Harris poll told a different story. Harris found that on a whole host of social issues, from prayer in the public schools to support for trimming the federal budget and reducing welfare programs, the electorate was far closer to Goldwater than Johnson. Goldwater the candidate was repudiated, but on a local level conservatism was intact and even thriving. In California, for instance, some areas which went very strongly for LBJ also voted to repeal the state's fair housing laws by a better than two-to-one margin.

The grass-roots opposition to statism and extensive social welfare programs was undiminished even when the Great Society was riding high in the Washington saddle. When the logic of civil rights rightly and necessarily led the federal government increasingly to impose itself on the organization of life in the localities, hometown conservatism was moved into the national arena and the groundwork was laid for the right wing revival. The "great" political development of the last fifteen years is the story of how the heirs of the new-stock immigrants joined with their rivals in regarding liberal interventionism, rightly or wrongly, as a threat to their day-to-day well being. In sum, the new alignment has pitted the society against its own government.

3. *The negative utopia*

BENEATH THE ENDLESS whining of the Old Right, first towards the New Deal and then towards the Great Society, there was a positive, even utopian vision of what the country ought to be. Oliver Wendell Holmes put his finger on the matter when he explained, "It has been our fate as a nation not to have ideologies but to be one." To be an American for the right has meant to share in the vision of a largely stateless society of free self-regulating individuals. The vision has survived corporate capitalism; and it is the possession of this time-honored vision which allowed the right to feel central to the nation even when it was pushed to the political periphery.

Americanism is derived from the Enlightenment belief in the sufficiency of God-given individual reason, which provides the basis on which men voluntarily come together to organize themselves. Leave aside your objections for a moment. This vision of a society without priests or masters and in which sovereign individuals govern themselves without the corrupting hand of bureaucracy is, however naive, still extremely attractive. Radicals who preach the virtues of neighborhood government and a "humane scale" society testify to the breadth of its appeal. The left is as likely as the right to quote with approval Paine's comments on government. "Society," he said, "performs for itself everything which is ascribed to government."

The appeal of the free-enterprise utopia is far more persistent and compelling to Americans than its left-wing rivals because, unlike the utopias of the left, elements of its vision — small-town cooperation, or the free interchange of the marketplace — appear regularly in the daily lives of part of the population. Unlike the radical, the rightist doesn't need to project a sharp break into a cloudy future; he can simply point

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to the need to purify and heighten what he already sees as good around him. The right also has a second advantage. It has, in its appeal to the family, a mechanism which can shape the character of the individuals who are to fulfill its utopian hopes. Liberals by contrast have to rely on the inherent goodness of people. A proposition which led Ring Lardner to remark that when the bet is on humanity, the odds are always nine to five against.

4. *Treason and loyalty*

INTERNAL CONSPIRACY was the central preoccupation of the Old Right. Its adherents were convinced of the existence of a vast, insidious, preternaturally effective international conspiratorial network designed to perpetrate acts of the most fiendish character. For all I know the devilish plots continue, but the right as a whole is paying less and less attention to them. It seems no more attracted to such fantasies than the left, some of whose most respected spokesmen were convinced that John Anderson was an agent of the Trilateral Commission. In fact the Trilaterals have achieved a position on the left similar to that once occupied in the forties by World Federalism on the right. To be sure, a hard line anti-Communism persists and there are still conspiratorial overtones to the epithet "Eastern Establishment," but even Phyllis Schlafly, who was said by Hofstadter to embody the paranoid style, has taken to peddling a more above-the-board brand of politics. She and other conservatives are spending far more time these days in a frontal intellectual and political assault than in spinning the gossamer theories which served to comfort them during their long internal exile.

If treason is no longer at the center of right-wing concerns, loyalty is. The foreign-policy hostilities and anti-Communist witch hunts of the forties obscured the fact that the debate over loyalty was in part a class conflict over the basic code people ought to live by. The deep-seated patriotism of the American working class derives in significant measure from the importance of loyalty in day-to-day life, in the emphasis on family and solidarity at work. Working-class and lower-middle-class people in general are far less skilled at the antagonistic cooperation which characterizes a great deal of professional and upper-middle-class work. For the non-professional, loyalty is essential to both identity and decency.

"Oh, I'm in favor of progress all right– what I can't stand is change!"

In the 1940s the charges of treason hurled at professional liberals appeared plausible to many blue-collar Americans because the experimental approach liberals brought to politics appeared to be based on a lack of loyalty to any fixed principles. The liberal love affair with growth and change can, from another angle, look like a dangerous instability. In a similar vein, ordinary people of all stripes are truly baffled by the change from equality of opportunity, which they came to accept, to affirmative action which justified "experiments" like busing. They see it, unfairly or not, as the product of elitist arrogance which is willing to ride roughshod over the ties which bind them to their neighborhoods and schools.

The abstracted numericalism of busing has reversed the symbolism which built support for civil rights. Instead of images of black children being attacked by racists, the daily fare pictures white children, like the three white girls who have recently become a cause célèbre in Louisiana, as victims of a judicial body count.

For the street corner conservative, abortion, welfare, and sexual promiscuity all involve unacceptable compromises with the personal loyalty that is at the root of their day-to-day morality. The fear is that if a man isn't loyal to his own seed or spouse or is unwilling to take care of his family obligations, he will be incapable of the reliability necessary for mutual loyalty.

4. *Normative versus behavioral deviance*

AT MEETING AFTER MEETING I've observed liberals and leftists scratching their heads and asking how is it possible for Ronald Reagan, a divorced man, to represent family values. "He's been divorced," they wail. "His daughter ran off with a rock group. A son dances. He has four children, but is a grandfather just once. . . ." The same issue showed up in an even more extreme form in the South Dakota senate race where George McGovern, a veteran, an ordained Christian minister, a husband married for thirty-five years, and the father of five, was successfully depicted as anti-American, anti-family and anti-Christian by an opponent who wasn't a vet, wasn't a minister, and wasn't even married. Liberals rightfully see this as hypocrisy without understanding the meaning of what they've stumbled across.

There is for conservatives of all varieties a remarkable strain of behavioral tolerance. When strongly pro-family Rep. Robert Bauman of Maryland was found to have engaged in some questionable sexual practices, he confessed his failing to his constituents, and at least some conservatives forgave him. It took *two* published incidents of homosexual promiscuity before conservative constituents of a Mississippi congressman gave up on him. And there are several examples of religious conservatives' recommending right-wing politicians known for doubtful financial habits over honest liberals. Conserva-

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tives, you see, are far more tolerant of people whose *actions* lead them astray than of people whose *ideas* challenge the basic consensus they see as necessary to organize society. Hypocrisy thus becomes a virtue. It is virtuous on the first count because it implies you have a set of standards to deviate from, unlike liberals whose experimentalism supposedly leaves them bereft of any moral anchors. And secondly the leaky wall between norms and behavior is seen as practically valuable. Since high standards are so difficult to live up to, it is important to be tolerant of an individual's peccadillos, just as long as they aren't too extreme.

The philosopher of the New Right, Wilmoore Kendall, argued that it was right and proper for Athens to put Socrates to death. Kendall argued that if someone insisted on contravening the mores of a society, the society — in order to protect itself — had no choice but to deal harshly with the transgressor. Coercion was essential, then, if naturally diverse minds were to form a common tendency. Kendall and his acolyte William Buckley feared that an open market in ideas, in which every idea was given its day, would lead to social disorder. It was necessary, Kendall believed, to accept a majoritarian conception of truth if society was to maintain its equilibrium. Writing about John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*, Kendall warned that ". . . when we elevate freedom of thought and speech to the position of society's highest good, it ceases to merely be freedom of thought and speech, and becomes — to a great many important matters — the society's ultimate standard of order." It is this fear of normative chaos which links Kendall's fervent support of Joe McCarthy to the majoritarian intolerance of the New Right.

Once upon a time liberals, seeking to criticize this numerical interpretation of right and wrong, could present themselves as the heirs of open-mindedness à la Mills or John Dewey. Unfortunately that's no longer possible. Censorship in the name of a "good" cause and the denial of individual conscience are no longer confined to the right. It is now feminists and liberals who insist on censoring textbooks to ensure the correct perspective. *Heidi* has recently been banned from the San Francisco schools on the grounds that it was anti-female. More striking is the case of the Georgia professor who was jailed with the support of the ACLU for being unwilling to reveal how he voted on a tenure case for a female colleague. Or to take another example, how can Planned Parenthood present itself as a champion of freedom of choice when it insists on mandatory sex education for the public schools?

"I can say we live in a fascist state if I want to. It's a free country."

The lack of a liberal commitment to free and open discussion through democratic debate can be seen in the two most controversial reforms of the seventies, busing and abortion. In both cases the liberal federal courts imposed a sweeping change on the country without the benefit of extended public discussion. The willingness of liberals to support government by judiciary when it suits their goals puts them in a poor position to lecture others about the need for a free and open society.

One final point here. Liberals, having finally grown sensitive to the inroads conservatives have made by playing on the fears of family breakdown, have argued that the chief threat to the family is the caprice of the market and not the impositions of the New Class. Behaviorally they're right. Market and corporate decisions can destroy communities and uproot families on a scale grander than that of the most purblind Washington planner. And inflation has done far more to pull women away from their children than feminism. But having said that, the liberals fail to see that the disorders wrought by capitalism leave the *norms* of family life unscathed. The Smiths may have to move from Duluth to Dallas, but wherever they go it will be New Class social engineers who will be criticizing the family as the seedbed of inequality and pathology. This criticism is bitterly resented, and it makes the "reformer" and not the capitalist the chief object of ire.

4. Concluding questions

THERE IS A DANGER that liberals, cajoled by the flattery of history and the desire to be on the winning side with the majority, will adopt me-tooism before Reagan's policies are given a chance to fail. Or that they will panic into reconstructing their politics in the manner of a market research religion which tries to combine the best features of the ten greatest theologies. Instead of rushing in with quick fixes, I suggest that liberals devote themselves to addressing two modest problems while we wait to see how long it takes Reagan to fall on his face. Conservatives argue that without the market as a crucible of character, the personal virtues necessary for a civilized life disappear. They point to the growing incivility and even sheer criminality which is more and more common in everyday life as the proof of their argument. Is there a liberal response? How do liberals propose to encourage individual character and what used to be called a virtuous citizenry? And finally how do liberals, congenitally tied to experimentalism, propose to address the need for heritage and tradition, played on so effectively by the right? Can liberals stand on the shoulders of the best that has come before them without turning into pale, Burkean reflections of their conservative rivals?

If there are no affirmative answers to these questions, then there is a good chance that Reaganism will long outlive the failures of Reagan.

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Reagan Republicanism

WILSON CAREY McWILLIAMS

IT IS SURELY a sign of the times that Ronald Reagan, by his own admission, voted for Roosevelt all four times he ran. One of Reagan's undoubted advantages as a presidential candidate was his freedom from the baggage of old-line Republicanism. He quoted Roosevelt happily; he paraded his admittedly peculiar trade-union past and his lifetime membership in the Screen Actors Guild. Even his attacks on the cherished gains of labor—his criticism of the minimum wage, for example—were couched in language designed to make them acceptable. Reagan argued for a "two-tier" wage system, with a lower minimum wage for teen-agers and the hard-core unemployed. Whatever else may be said of this proposal, it was tailored to allay the fears of established white workers. Reagan preferred to run as a New Dealer grown conservative, and that stance persuaded millions of voters that he was safe enough to afford them the luxury of dumping Carter.

Reagan's campaign, in other words, signals changes in conservatism more striking than any change in the Democratic majority. Not so long ago, Reagan's rhetorical fondness for organized labor would have been high treason in Republican circles. The "supply side" economics symbolized by the Kemp-Roth tax proposal, moreover, indicates the change even more clearly. Traditional Republican doctrine always worried about inflation. True to laissez-faire, it wanted to let the market alone and relied heavily on the "bourgeois virtues" of the independent middle class. The cure for inflation, in this doctrine, was less consumption and more saving, self-discipline, and frugality. Asked the cure for rising food prices in 1947, Senator Robert A. Taft responded, "We should eat less." Nothing could have been more alien to the style and substance of Reagan's campaign, and Reagan made much, scornfully, of Carter's suggestion that inflation resulted from the fact that we have lived "too well." Rectitude and self-denial were themes of Congressman Anderson's campaign, but Anderson's old style, middle-class individualism is now peripheral in Republican politics.

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Reagan's proposals turn on the notion that less restraint — a massive tax cut — can stimulate investment and productivity enough to offset inflation. Self-indulgence takes the place of self-denial. After years of learning that "you don't shoot Santa Claus," the Republicans decided to nominate him. Even if Reagan's proposals work as well as he hopes, they make a mockery of middle-class virtues. Ants are only grim, ill-humored folks who eat badly; grasshoppers are good citizens who fight inflation too. Supply side economics is self-consciously modeled on the Kennedy tax cut of 1963, and it clearly involves government planning, though planning of a decidedly conservative sort.

In fact, a good many of Reagan's promises suggest more government intervention, not less. During the campaign, for example, he argued for "enterprise zones" to stimulate growth in the industrial cities, and his transition team circulated a paper that would deny federal aid to any locality that persisted in rent control. These are conservative plans, but they call for a good deal of government involvement on behalf of the "private sector." And all this says nothing about Reagan's proposals for stronger defense and federal policies to defend the family.

In fact, the term "private sector" is a talisman. In the first place, it suggests that there is a legitimate *public* sector, an inescapable component of government input into and regulation of our economic life. In the second place, referring to the "private sector" allows Reagan to scrap "free enterprise" with its laissez-faire connotations. Like quoting Roosevelt, referring to the "private sector" is a way of disowning the past, abandoning the world of the independent, small-town bourgeoisie for the new world of tax shelters, multinationals, and computer programs, where planning is the rule.

Reagan suggests that the private sector, assisted by a sympathetic government, can make sacrifice unnecessary. We are an "energy-rich" country, and the energy companies will prove it. Taxing ourselves less will still enable us to balance the budget and provide for a bigger military, and at the same time interest rates will come down. Reagan, in other words, presents himself as the defender of the American "fifth freedom," the *right to consume*, and he assures us that we will enjoy that liberty in his term of office.

It is hard to say how much of this the voters believed. Carter took a more somber tone, but he also shied away from any call for self-denial, promising "careful" and "bal-

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anced'' tax cuts and the like. Voters, in other words, were neither asked nor permitted to choose between austerity and extravagance. Anderson's ''new realism'' seems the exception to this rule, since he did not hesitate to call for restraint. With few exceptions, however, Anderson's supporters knew he would not win; they knew, in other words, that in practice they would not be required to *make* the sacrifices he urged. His candidacy, therefore, had a secret attraction for well-to-do liberals. Since in practice, a vote for Anderson helped elect Reagan, his supporters could affirm their anti-inflationary *principles* at the same time that they forwarded their inflationary *desires*. In any case, it seems likely that a great many of Reagan's supporters took their candidate's economics with a grain of salt.

It is hard to believe, for example, that a great many voters did not notice that Reagan's faith in the private sector was contradicted by Detroit's dramatic, dismal failure to anticipate the demand for small, fuel-economical cars. In reality, the auto industry showed all the rigidity and lack of imagination that, in conservative doctrine, is supposed to characterize government. The auto industry underrated the need to economize and our willingness to do so; the federal government, by contrast, had been urging the change on a recalcitrant Detroit for some time. The example of the auto industry does not augur well for a policy of ''getting the government off the backs of the American people.'' Detroit will need more help, not less, and the new conservatives will probably provide it. The private sector does not want to be let alone; it wants government to help it and, where necessary, to pick up the tab. In economics, that is likely to be the direction of the new regime.

A good many Democrats who defected to Reagan ignored his economics. They voted for him in the hope that he will do something about the ''social issue,'' introducing government into the world of the family and the other traditional refuges of private life. Clearly, this calls for ''big government'' with a vengeance, and while the social issue was bound to hurt any Democratic regime, the new Republican administration is not likely to find it much more congenial.

Americans continued to feel society crumbling around them in 1980. Carter had promised to make the American family a major concern of his administration, but the Democrats only damaged themselves when they tried to address the issue. Civil libertarians and partisans of new, ''liberated'' arrangements protested against making the traditional family the norm of policy, and the administration yielded, although it ought to have been possible to advocate stronger and more stable relationships whether or not these are ''traditional.'' Fundamentalists expected more from Carter than Sunday pieties, and they did not get it. And while Carter himself was against providing federal funds for abortion—little enough to ask, as ''right-to-lifers'' saw it—the Democratic convention in New York decidedly did not share the president's view.

Reagan made every effort to appeal to social conservatives, especially since the social issue lies at the hiatus between the liberals and working-class Democrats. There is little doubt that Reagan's administration will continue this strategy, and the new president can be relied on to oppose the ERA and abortion, to look for ways to permit prayer in the schools, and possibly to support aid to denominational education.

THERE IS every reason, however, to think that Reagan's social conservatism, though sincere, is also superficial. The forces that are weakening local communities and families are bound up with our individualism, mobility, and commitment to growth. Change, writes Alvin Toffler, is ''unsteady, irregular and hard to predict'' and makes yesterday's certainties into today's follies. We cannot commit ourselves very deeply to the institutions that are so prone to change; and people, like everything else, are only too likely to be different tomorrow. Children, uprooted from homes and neighborhoods, learn through loss to be more reserved in making their commitments. People who are left behind—so often the old—frequently suffer even more than those who leave, and become still more guarded in consequence. Long-distance may be ''the next best thing to being there,'' but A.T.&T. is only reminding us that we will probably *not* live close to our families or old friends. Our communities, as Scott Greer wrote years ago, are ''limited liability communities'' where we learn to commit ourselves only superficially, retaining the freedom to cut our losses or move up as the social market dictates.

Family relationships are bound to reflect these currents. We have learned more and more to regard divorce as a normal event of life. The election of Reagan, the first divorced person to become president, will probably do more to legitimate divorce than his conservatism will do to stabilize families. Yet the more normal divorce seems, the more we are reminded that we can and do make mistakes in judging others, even in our most important commitments and in our strongest feelings. And thus the more we are likely to limit our subsequent commitments. Herbert Hendin writes that affection and harmony are growing scarcer, ''in and out of families.'' We are drawing more and more into ourselves and away from family, country, and community.

Reagan is not likely to lend federal power to the quest for stability in personal relationships. To do so, however indirectly, would require a willingness to curb individual freedom, change, and economic growth; but both Republican ideology and the corporate economy regard such restraint as anathema. To make family, community, and morality the goals of public policy would require that we subordinate private liberty to civil order, something neither Reagan nor his party is likely to consider. As Reagan's ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick, wrote in 1979:

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Republican spokesmen have consistently emphasized private concerns such as profit and taxes, and private virtues such as self-discipline and self-reliance, and either have not had, or have not communicated, a persuasive conception of the public good.

The reason is simple: The tradition of liberal individualism, which shapes Republican ideology, acknowledges no public good that is not simply an aggregate of private goods and liberties. Reagan will give social conservatives the symbols, but he will leave the substance to the forces that are making for privatism and social disintegration. If there is light and hope in the future of the Republic, it is not visible in the election of 1980.

Screen

STAR WARTS

'AND THE WINNER IS . . .'

LOUIS B. MAYER invented the Oscars in 1927 in an effort to create an elite for the movie industry. This attempt to dignify Hollywood, which had a lot of social insecurities, was much appreciated by local residents. Yet the Oscar didn't really come into its own until the mid-1930s, when the Depression finally hit the movie business and Oscar turned out to be a great promotional device with which to compensate for the decline. That has been Oscar's goal in life, his *raison d'etré*, ever since: to help buck up the flagging fortunes of movies. As he has now come to have the opposite effect, however, it is time to cut out the annual nonsense and retire Oscar to history. On the nationally televised Awards ceremony each year, Hollywood makes such a pathetic spectacle of itself that, far from encouraging the public to go to movies, the program is keeping people away.

I'll spare you a long litany of the evils of the nominations—the good films that have been overlooked, the mediocre ones that are being honored, etc. Suffice it to say that eight nominations for a nonentity like *The Elephant Man* was absurd. The film is one of hundreds nominated over the years that tell us less about their purported subjects than about the mores of the Academy's members. It is Oscar, rather than the Elephant Man, who is the Victorian grotesque here. But let's get right to the Awards program itself. That's where the real damage to the movies is done. First, the program demonstrates that no movie star can act. Indeed, none can even do two minutes of repartee from cue cards without flubbing half the lines. Second, the program demonstrates that no movie star has any personality. Maybe it was just decrepitude and old age, but even Henry Fonda, whose Lifetime-Achievement Award was the program's only affecting moment, seemed rather lackluster. Staring at this trophy in recognition of a half-century career, he reflected wearily, "I guess this is the climax." If so, all great movie careers end not with a bang but a whimper.

It's not only the ineptness of the stars that makes the program seem pathetic. The production numbers interspersed throughout the proceedings help too. Every year the same old clips of Great Moments in Movie History are shown, and among them is the "Gotta Dance" number from *Singin' in the Rain*. Every year the Academy Awards program's own numbers struggle to top that old standard. Even in *Singin' in the Rain*, such a number is only attempted once, as a finale. By trying to match it four or five times in the course of one show, the Awards program makes itself ridiculous. Worse still, it ignores the individual requirements of the nominated songs that are being performed. All the charm of *Fame*, for instance, lies in the improvised and spontaneous feeling of its numbers. It's a movie in which exuberance makes up for the stars' lack of experience. But these were the very qualities sacrificed by the program's rendition of "Out Here on My Own," where *Fame*'s black teenage star wore a slinky sequined gown and was delivered to a chorus of fans by a stage-set limousine. "And now, from the people who brought you *1941*, *The Blues Brothers*, and *Heaven's Gate*, . . ." here was another over-produced turkey.

Even the clothes were over-produced. It's as if the sole criterion for elegance in a gown were that it be impossible to wear. Mary Tyler Moore's was so elaborate that she should have had two escorts—one to escort her and another to escort her left sleeve. (Lily Tomlin's black satin slacks and red blouse with a simple Chinese collar were the only outfit with real class. It showed up all the others for what they were: vulgar.) No one is exempt from the exercise in self-humiliation, including Mr. Television himself, Johnny Carson. Bad material is Carson's speciality, but he can only get laughs out of it in the intimate format of his own show, where he has a small, live audience and one person, Ed McMahon, to play to. Standing at a podium on a vast, empty stage before a convention-hall audience, he too becomes stiff and graceless. His monologue fell flat.

In fact, he only managed to make himself amusing later, when his jibes at the program became more specific and vicious. The program is truly embarrassing to watch. I always have a knot in my stomach as I wait for its missed cues, its bungled attempts at wit, its failure to entertain. Carson at least helps relieve my anxiety because he brings it out in the open. When he warns us not to "drive a car or operate heavy machinery" after listening to a speech by Jack Valenti, or when he points out ominously that after forty minutes only one of the program's twenty awards has been given, he at least turns the occasion to his advantage. But he's the only one who can. Perhaps it's right that the one performer who survives the annual fiasco is the only one whose career is in television and not in motion pictures at all. We were constantly reminded that this was the Fifty-Third Annual Academy Awards, but no one mentioned that the program has also been on television for almost thirty years. It has been television's show since the beginning—TV's annual put-down of the whole idea of movies and movie stars.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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Media

IN MEDIA RES

TOO MUCH BACKGROUND NOISE

I AM GOING to tell a true story, without names, but also without what Huck Finn would call stretchers. I remembered the story, for reasons that will be apparent, while watching television coverage of the hostage drama, when reporters and their crews dragged cameras and cables through the living rooms of the hostages' families. But that large episode in our recent cultural and political history is not my topic; my story is a small one.

It is important that you understand, if you draw any moral from it, that the media folk, though young and therefore unavoidably products of the media epoch, are nevertheless honorable, attractive, and—in their way, to a fault—conscientious. But you must also understand that this tale involves mere radio, and persons who are not eminent, and a program for a relatively small audience. To translate it into the big time world of television, you must multiply its implications by a factor of—what? Ten? Twenty? Fifty?

When I told this tale to a man who produces programs for one of the TV networks he said, "That's the story of my life."

It was winter. Very cold with snow and ice in Northern New England. I had called a distinguished older political activist and former Ambassador, now in retirement up there, to request a taped interview for a documentary program. He was enormously helpful and generous, and invited me to come up to his home in the snow, where he and his wife would be happy to put me up overnight. He would talk to me all I wanted to talk. I explained, embarrassed, that it wasn't like the world of mere writers. I didn't come alone; there would be a producer and technician with me, with the machinery. "Let them come too," he said, with the manners derived from another world. "We will be happy to have them."

I was working on this program not on my own initiative but at the request of, and—as I learned to my sorrow—under the direction of, a national radio organization. The producer, not the writer/consultant, had the final say.

This program had pretensions to the most extraordinary excellence—sonically. It was to last forever and to reflect the "state of the art,"—in *sound*. There was a striving for a high level of intellect, too, and of art in its other meanings, but perfection in these regards is not as easy to identify, or to attain, as *sonic* perfection. In the case of a conflict sound would win.

The retired Ambassador, our host, met me at the little airport to give me a ride to his house. When the producer and technician arrived on another plane they declined a ride, rented a car, and followed us to his house.

Once there they promptly set about searching for the best room for recording. After some deliberation they chose the living room.

While the engineer arranged his machines our host and I began to have a pleasant chat about the subject of the broadcast. The producer, overhearing us, abruptly intervened. "Stop," she said. "You may talk about anything else. But don't burn off the interview."

Chagrined, we sought other subjects.

When we began to record there came a sound from outside. A dog's bark. The needle on the engineer's big recording machine jumped and bounced.

"Whose dog is *that*?"

It belonged to our hosts, so our hostess walked the dog to the house of distant friends, and asked them to care for it until this experience was over.

When we began the interview again the production team decided that the living room wasn't the best room after all, and asked if we could move into the kitchen. Yes, of course we could. We stopped the interview and waited until the machinery was set up again.

But there was a problem with the kitchen: in that room one could hear the sound of the heating system, working hard on this cold day. Could we stand it, for the period of the interview, if the heat were turned off? Yes, of course we could.

At last, a little chilly, we were well into the interview when the technician waved his hand and stopped us yet again.

"There is something wrong with my tape," he said. "I can't understand what it is."

He asked if he could use the telephone, and repeatedly called Washington and New York, tying up this family's phone for forty-five minutes.

It was a Saturday, and he had a hard time finding an engineering genius. Eventually he found somebody to advise him and decided that the problem was the *cold*: nature taking this little slap at culture. The tape had been in the unheated baggage section of the little Air New England plane on this very cold January day, and had frozen its magic powers.

Fortunately the engineer had kept one piece of tape with him in the front of the plane, so it was warm enough to function. He changed tapes and finally allowed us to begin again.

A little frayed, we started again. We were rolling along in the interview, when he waved us to yet another halt.

"I am still getting a little background noise," he said. "What is that sizzle?"

As we had examined the house for a site for this event we had noticed that our hostess, a lovely woman in her seventies, had a fully set table, in the dining room, waiting for some guests: us.

The sizzle, it was now explained, was the roast beef she had in the oven, cooking for our dinner.

"Could we turn that off?" asked the engineer.

At least when we finally ate it the media people didn't complain that it was underdone.

WILLIAM LEE MILLER

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Defend the Family

Sensibly

Finally, the health of the family has become a top priority item on the national agenda of concern. It's about time, for the family is the premier humanizing institution of our society. The family is where love is grounded and actualized in commitment, where we learn to give as well as receive, where the harsh judgments of the marketplace can be neutralized by love and forgiveness. It is the embryo of a better, less impersonal, less calculating society. It is our children and our future.

But **there are lethal forces at loose eating away at the health of the American family:** women's lib extremism *and* the battering of wives and children, abortion *and* unemployment, "gay" politics *and* careerism, pornography *and* greed, and even the television-as-babysitter.

The *New Oxford Review*, a new and unique Christian monthly, seeks to protect the family on all fronts — and do so without being shrill, kooky, bigoted, intimidating, or just plain reactionary.

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We believe the time has come to build a national pro-family consensus. If the Christian New Rightists are allowed to exploit the family issue and use it to divide conservatives from liberals, Republicans from Democrats, they may have some momentary success in winning power for themselves, but they will poison the wellsprings of social renewal. And ultimately, the pro-family cause will be the victim, for its momentum will be stymied as it isolates itself in the ghettoes of resentment and rancor.

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Doubleday, $14.95, 286 pp.

A. J. Beitzinger

IN his controversial recent study, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence*, Garry Wills argued that the philosophy underlying the Declaration is not Lockean individualism but eighteenth-century Scottish moral sense communitarianism. In his equally lively and learned new book, *Explaining America: The Federalist*, Wills continues his revisionism by following the earlier lead of Douglass Adair and reading the *Federalist Papers* in light of the social thought of the Scottish moral sense philosopher, David Hume. His main focus is determined by the critical questions raised regarding the meaning and validity of the central papers (Nos. 10 and 51) by political scientists from Beard (economic determinism) and Laski (pluralism) to Dahl (polyarchy) and Burns (deadlock). Not only does he reject their interpretation but because Hume is his guide he also rejects significant points propounded by the presently ascendant Country-Whig republican school (Bailyn, Wood, Pole, Pocock).

He begins by unwarrantedly assuming: (1) that the Madison of the *Federalist* has been generally misinterpreted by scholars as a strict-constructionist, anti-British Constitution advocate; and (2) that the Hamilton of the *Federalist* has been misconstrued as a broad constructionist mixed-government monarchist. If one grants these assumptions one can see how Wills can validly speak of the "Hamiltonian Madison" and the "Madisonian Hamilton." Led by Hume he proceeds to the heart of the book, a spirited discussion of *Federalist* 10 and 51, interjecting an insightful discussion of papers 78 and 81 which concern judicial review. In paper No. 10 Madison argued that faction (self-interested combination) was inevitable in free government and could be checked by an extension of territory which would render it difficult for any one group or combination of groups to control. On this basis Madison argued in paper No. 51 for separation of powers and bicameralism.

The thrust of political science criticism (Dahl, Burns, etc.) has been that the result is "deadlock" in government. Wills grants a limited validity to this interpretation but sees it finally in error because it misses the main point. Quite plausibly he argues that one misreads the *Federalist* if one ignores the writers' intentions and construes in light of the actual historical working of American government. As Wills sees it Madison sought to replace government by "interest" with government by "virtue" directed toward a common good understood not as a mere resultant of conflicting or compromising group interests. Thus the filtering of unrefined popular virtue within a broad territorial extent through elections of representatives from large districts tends to the selection of men of *probitas* and *gravitas* with a broad vision of public good. This is a valid reading if one deletes Wills's gratuitous Humean intrusion of a series of elections and focuses on the other factors, particularly the large districts. The point is that the *Federalist*, when read in light of what Wills calls "the scientific aim and method of the book," precludes the facile reduction, by "realist" political science, of normative motivations such as "common good" and "public virtue" to "interest," "power," and "equilibrium." In what amounts to a rehabilitative apotheosis of the Founding Fathers, the communitarian Jefferson of Wills's first book is now joined by Madison and Hamilton as apostles of virtue and common good. This is revisionism which cuts both left and right. Those who wish to pin ideological labels on controversial writers like Wills will be confused.

Granting the validity if not the originality of Wills's interpretation, fundamental shortcomings exist apart from his not altogether regrettable proclivity toward controversy. The desire to be guided by "the scientific aim and method of the book" is at once helped and hindered by the heavy reliance upon Hume. It has only been recently recognized that Hume had a significant influence on Madison and Hamilton, as well as other of the founders. Wills, however, writes as if Hume and not "experience" — which Hamilton and Madison saw as "the best oracle of wisdom" — was their principal guide. This leads to an over-intellectualization of a series of practical political issues. The result downplays historical context and specific motivation. Both men wanted a strong central authority above the faction-ridden state governments. They necessarily and constructively used the rhetoric of republicanism with its emphasis upon what Wills calls "the proper equations between extent of territory, size of government, number of representatives" to effect a concrete political interest. Wills no doubt would admit this; the point, however, is that the Humean orientation tilts his book in the direction of an exercise in ideas removed from specific context.

In like vein Wills tends to treat "interest" and "virtue" as if they were disjunctive terms with individuals distinguished accordingly. He confronts a problem when he acknowledges the *Federalist* writers' pessimism concern-

> *We have been told that Madison pitted interest against interest in a constructive process of self-correction. The texts I have looked at say that interest is to be eliminated from the political arena, distilled out of the process, just as religious sects are. The aim of the electoral "refining" process is to produce* disinterested *men at the top of the ruling structure.* —Garry Wills
> *Explaining America*

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ing human nature with their emphasis on the ubiquity of self-love and passion. ("What is government but the greatest of all inflections on human nature?") This is indeed supplemented but not overcome by Madison's statement: "As there is a degree of depravity in mankind which requires a certain degree of circumspection and distrust, so there are other qualities in human nature, which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence. Republican government presupposes the existence of these qualities in a higher degree than any other form." At most this indicates different degrees of human combination of "interest" and "virtue." Madison precludes disjunction — betting that extended republicanism will allow a higher degree of virtue than narrow interest to emerge. Institutions are then of the highest importance insofar as they are *believed* or *shown* to bring forth through refinement rule by the higher type of man. That Madison would soon greatly qualify his position in the crucible of practice by working with Jefferson beginning in 1791 to organize a political party (something he condemned as "faction" in paper No. 10) and that Hamilton as Secretary of Treasury would put main emphasis on interests and nationalist policies, Wills, as interpreter of the *Federalist*, properly and quite conveniently ignores. And yet the old questions linger: Was Hamilton really the dedicated republican we find in the *Federalist*? Was Madison at once a formidable and heroic protagonist of republicanism, a poor political scientist, and, as Wills half-heartedly concedes, an even lesser prophet? With two more books in the series promised by Wills perhaps such questions will be addressed if not answered.

Paul's apocalyptic theology

PAUL THE APOSTLE
THE TRIUMPH OF GOD IN LIFE AND THOUGHT

J. Christian Beker
Fortress, $22.95, 452 pp.

John B. Sheerin

SAUL OF TARSUS who became Paul the Apostle was in many respects a baffling personality. Undoubtedly the most influential figure in the early church, apart from Jesus himself, he was nevertheless shrouded in mystery. His conversion was a surprising turnabout from fanatical persecutor to dedicated Apostle: conversion meant for him the collapse of his world and the annihilation of his earlier code of values but it also meant a new orientation to his life, a personal relationship to Jesus whom he never saw except in a blinding flash of light. It was through this extraordinary relationship that he was preserved from that corrosive anger so natural to him, religious fanaticism.

This present volume, however, scarcely touches on Paul's conversion but deals mainly with the apocalyptic thought and language of Judaism which Paul loved and which expressed the deepest aspirations of his mind and heart.

Kasemann described this apocalyptic language as "the mother of Christian theology." J. Christian Beker of Princeton, author of the present volume, contends that the coherent center of Paul's thinking lay in the apocalyptic interpretation of the Christ-event and that Paul's thought is misinterpreted when this fact is ignored. The term "apocalyptic theology" has had its detractors. Some years ago, Schnackenburg vilified "this dwelling on fantastic nightmares, this conscious excitement of activity and fear, this deliberate indulgence in an emotional exploitation of the end of the world, coupled with the hammering on the theme of apocalyptics' secret knowledge . . . all these things are a heavy shadow on the picture otherwise so radiant, of universal perfection: and they are a blot on the apocalyptic writers who created them." (*God's Rule and Kingdom*, New York, 1963)

For Beker, however, as for Paul, apocalyptic is the indispensable means for properly interpreting the Christ-event for it points explicitly or implicitly to "the imminent cosmic triumph of God."

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One of the most remarkable things about the life of Paul is how little we know about him and how little he tells us about his life. How is it possible for a man so little given to self-confession to emerge as such a distinct and clear person from his letters and to convey such an intense personal identity to us? This is a curious phenomenon, especially when we recall the passionate soliloquies of a Jeremiah – in many ways Paul's prophetic model.

—J. Christian Beker
Paul the Apostle

Beker contends that Resurrection language is incomprehensible apart from "the apocalyptic thought world to which resurrection language belongs." Because Resurrection is an apocalyptic matter, the Resurrection of Christ must be understood apocalyptically as the advance manifestation of the General Resurrection to come.

We may think of Paul as a radical in regard to Jewish law and he did radicalize phases of Jewish life. He was not a revolutionary. He was critical and concerned about the hypocrisy and antics of certain Scribes and Pharisees but not about the law. Jesus himself was critical of certain practices but not of the law. "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them." (Matt. 5:17) As a matter of fact other Christians had preceded Paul in liberalizing observance of the Torah. In fact, the break between the Torah and Christ made way for the equality of Jew and Gentile. "Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also since God is one." (*Romans* 3:29-30)

Beker's attitude toward Paul is of special significance in the light of the current Jewish-Christian dialogue. He says that at one time Judaism viewed Paul as "the great apostate and specifically as the originator of both Catholic dogma and anti-semitism," but Beker shows that this popular picture of Paul is "completely erroneous" for Paul loved the people of promise and was devoted to the Hebrew Scriptures. It is true that Paul's apocalyptic thought caused some raising of eyebrows in the Jewish community but a new evaluation of apocalyptic by Jewish scholars now seems well under way (e.g. Jochanan Bloch). We don't have all the answers to the many and diverse problems of Christian-Jewish dialogue but most Jews as well as Christians feel that the dialogue must continue.

The author of this immensely erudite study of Paul has given me a whole world of new insights into apocalyptic theology that I never knew existed. The very subtitle itself. "The Triumph of God in Life and Thought," is an invitation to meditation and reflection. To be honest, however, I must confess I have one complaint: the author's style is too turgid, arcane and almost occult for my taste. In apocalyptic, clarity is imperative.

Submerged in a swarming choreography

MACHO CAMACHO'S BEAT
Luis Rafael Sanchez
Translated by Gregory Rabassa
Pantheon, $10.95, 211 pp.

Ronald Christ

"AND the beat goes on, and the beat goes on, and the beat goes on." droned Sonny and Cher in the 60s. Any reader of Luis Rafael Sánchez's *Macho Camacho's Beat* will probably add, "And on, and on, and on—and *on*." Of course it's a different beat: the tangy, frenetic, myriad beat of the *guaracha*; but the deadening effect of prose drone—the insistence on one figure of repetition, a kind of Motown metrics for prose—almost drowns out the praise or respect you might voice for the novel.

Which is too bad. Despite the burden of condescending praise, ignorant demands on translation, and the "Oh, wow!" flutter of novelty, Sánchez's work is lively and admirable, a good first novel by an industrious and talented writ-

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er. To realize that, however, you must first clear the literary dance floor. To begin, this is the first Puerto Rican novel translated into English. No honor that, to any publisher: only a burden to writer and translator, a burden having nothing to do with inherent worth. So let's forget the dried laurel and leave the truly awesome responsibilities of neglect and performance to historians of literature, sociologists, and other lobbyists.

Second, any work of literature that aspires to the condition of music, as this one does, loudly, cannot be translated *as such*: its music, both in the notes of its syllables and the rhythm of its phrases, is precisely what cannot carry from one language to another, certainly not from a Romance language to English. Therefore, to find fault with the translator for not having produced *the* music of Sánchez's book is to declare one's ignorance of what any translator can do. Gregory Rabassa can do a lot. He is still—along with Helen R. Lane—the best, the most flexible, the most literate translator of Spanish and Portuguese fiction into English. In this book, which is a funhouse hall of verbal mirrors, he romps, struts, wiggles, and glistens, producing, not the dull symmetry of expression in two languages—the kind of schematic reflection implicit in face-to-face translations of prose—but a joyous razzle dazzle of pun and rhetorical figure properly congruent with Sánchez's highly figured prose. If anyone has been bored by *Macho Camacho's Beat*, it has not been Rabassa.

Lastly, the kind of all-too-typical praise quoted on the dust jacket can only harm Sánchez's chance of making it among people who read novels instead of rah-rahing books that coincide with their own canting interests:

> Luis Rafael Sánchez's novel is a scandal. It should be banned or censored or, at least, not allowed to fall into the hands of Anglos. Sánchez is too funny about his lowlife Puerto Ricans, too mordant, too compassionate: regular Philip Roth let loose on the island. Anglos may get the idea that Puerto Ricans are as complex, as varied, as human as themselves — what will we do with all the stereotypes then?

Hard to answer, especially when you can't tell who that final "we" includes; but no doubting that this novel presents more than "lowlife Puerto Ricans"—though they're there too—and no doubting, either, that presumably highlife "Anglos" will never learn the infinite variety of Puerto Rican types from Sánchez. What they might learn, however, is the vision, craft, and ambition of Sánchez's book.

Freed from these ethnic cheerleaders and translation-workshop boo-ers, *Macho Camacho's Beat* prances into the cosmopolitan form of the city-in-a-day book invented and patented in English by James Joyce, that other colonial writer, and delicately pirated by Virginia Woolf, that other oppressed individual. Sánchez swaggers beyond those two in submerging his characters in a swarming choreography of people, motifs, and expressions, so that his novel is almost all corps, no principal dancers, even though there are a few identifiable performers, like the Mother who leaves her idiot baby out in the tropical sun, Senator Vincente Reinosa, whose son Benny conducts a teenager's hot romance with his Ferrari, which crashes the book, expectedly, into a *liebestodt* of post-Faulknerian-a-la-Hitchcock "brains splattered on the door of the Ferrari and . . . some eyes plopped in the gutter like the yokes of half-fried eggs."

As in *Ulysses* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, what ties Sánchez's characters together is the novelist's crisscrossing of daily lives in ways unrecognized by the characters themselves. Joyce used the vice-regal cavalcade, Woolf the dove-grey limousine as well as a sky-writing plane, and Sánchez his *guaracha* lyric "Life is a Phenomenal Thing," which has taken the fictional island by storm and invaded every character's life with the devastation of García Márquez's *Leafstorm*. More closely, *Macho Camacho's Beat* resembles Cabrera Infante's *Three Trapped Tigers*, which on a vaster scale of space, time, and thought instantized life in Cuba at the brink of Fidel's revolution. By contrast, that instantaneity, that groovy moment right now, separates Sánchez's people from the characters in Puig's *Heartbreak Tango*, people for whom drooping lyrics of *milongas* and tangos mark life's literal pulse.

Obviously, then, Sánchez introduces his novel into very good literary company, and does so with an appropriate modesty of range in character and theme for a first novel. He radically miscalculates, on the other hand: Whereas the writers I've just cited all multiply and manner literary devices to clump characters in verbal communities, Sánchez relies on just one. the result is deadly—as if Joyce had written all of *Ulysses* in a single narrative technique, that of the "Wandering Rocks" section, say. Beginning successive units of prose with identical words or phrases, Sánchez self-consciously organizes his novel—he's nothing if he's not a writer who *knows* what he's doing—with the rhetorical device of *anaphora*. Here's a sample:

> Turn after turn, she sits down to wait sitting down, to wait sweaty

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> on the sweaty sofa, vox populi has it that African fires scorch the isle of Puerto Pico, to wait in perspiration: because the light has gone, because the light goes every afternoon, because the afternoon doesn't work, because the air-conditioning doesn't work, because the country doesn't work . . .

The novel flashes images like a movie projector with a broken ratchet. Of course Sánchez does vary the trick by complicating his style with puns, allusions, and rhymes, but many of these are annoyingly repetitive too, like the interminable repetitions of and variations on "Vince is a prince, no accidents, clean rinse." The *Beat* strikes rhythmic sparks at first, then sputters. Finally, it tics.

Which, again, is too bad. These stylistic shenanigans display the author's flashy control of the slippery matter of popular culture, political consequence, and vulgar drama. All the devices, including the petty (Joycean?) references to things only a certain set of Puerto Ricans and their friends in San Juan might care about—like the allusion to Rafi Rodríguez (Rabarra's colleague at Queens College who commutes from Puerto Rico) and his Tamayo (which hangs in his New York apartment)—float in the prose rhythm. They are all suspended—undigested and undigestible alike—in the hip-jiggling medium of the *guaracha*, imitated by anaphoric bumps that keep all the clutter of high and low culture trivia swinging in a stew the way a Cusinart on pulse makes soup. That swirling, spicy soup is Sánchez's vision of contemporary Puerto Rico.

Macho Camacho's Beat will be hawked as a sing-song *Grito de San Juan* in literature and anatomized by chill-fingered academics. (Imagine the which hunt for all those references!) Too bad, because any few sections of the book read fast and cool: breezy prose refrains of imitable identity. All together, their effect is like listening non-stop to six albums of "The Bessie Smith Story": after a while, your anticipation of the repetition makes *you*, not the work, wild.

Piety & prejudice

PREOCCUPATIONS
SELECTED PROSE 1968-1978
Seamus Heaney
Farrar, Straus Giroux, $15, 226 pp.

ACTS OF UNION
REPORTS ON IRELAND 1973-1979
Anthony Bailey
Random House, $8.95, 211 pp.

Jack Holland

THE AMERICAN poet Gary Snyder wrote in 1956 that a modern poet was faced with the alternatives of either embracing "his people, history, tradition . . . folding himself in a wealth of persons and pasts . . ." or stepping beyond "into horrors and angels, possible transcendence. . . ." Perhaps part of the reason why Irish literature in this century has been so rich and complex is that this implied dichotomy does not exist for Irish artists. The historical experience of Ireland is full of "horrors and angels." Irish writers have, with varying degrees of success, spent their creative lives grappling with both. The work of Seamus Heaney, whom some critics regard as the finest poet since Yeats, has been created against a background of contemporary horrors in his native Ulster. In his poetry, and now in *Preoccupations*, his first prose collection, he reminds us that the cultural situation facing the Irish poet is still different from that confronted by his American and English colleagues, but in ways which seem to nourish the creative resources of the English language.

The creative endeavors of Irish poets and writers have often the urgency of a rescue operation for a colonized people — an attempt to salvage and then establish a sense of identity out of the wreckage of generations of war and upheaval. In *Preoccupations* Heaney uses a sexual metaphor to express the tension between his Irish-Gaelic heritage and his English-based education:

> . . . the feminine element for me involves the matter of Ireland and the masculine strain is drawn from the involvement with English literature. I speak and write in English, but do not altogether share the preoccupations and perspectives of an Englishman. I teach English literature, I publish in London but the English tradition is not ultimately home.

In an essay based on a lecture he gave to the Royal Society of Literature he elaborates on this metaphor as a way of looking at the current violence in Northern Ireland:

> To some extent the enmity can be viewed as a struggle between the cults and devotees of a god and a goddess. There is an indigenous territorial numen, a tutelar of the whole island, call her Mother Ireland, Kathleen Ni Houlihan, the poor old woman, the Shan Van Vocht, whatever; and her sovereignty has been temporarily usurped or infringed by a new male cult whose founding fathers were Cromwell, William of Orange, and Edward Carson and whose godhead is incarnate in a rex or caesar resident in a palace in London. What we have is the tail-end of a struggle in a province between territorial piety and imperial power.

While well aware that, as a possible explanation of the Northern Ireland problem, this is rather too quaint, Heaney points out that it is "not remote from the psychology of the Irishmen and Ulstermen who do the killing." And in a sense he is right: these pieties do supply emotive images and symbols for the Irish struggle. In any case, they are imaginitively satisfying and rich for the poet and this in the end must be the measure of their usefulness.

"Territorial piety" is the homage Heaney's poems pay to his homeland and its dialect. In the first section of the book, he relates how such piety informs his poetry; in section two, Heaney broadens his scope to consider the creative processes of such poets as Hopkins, Wordsworth, and Yeats, as well as dealing with the importance of a sense of place, crucial source of nourishment for

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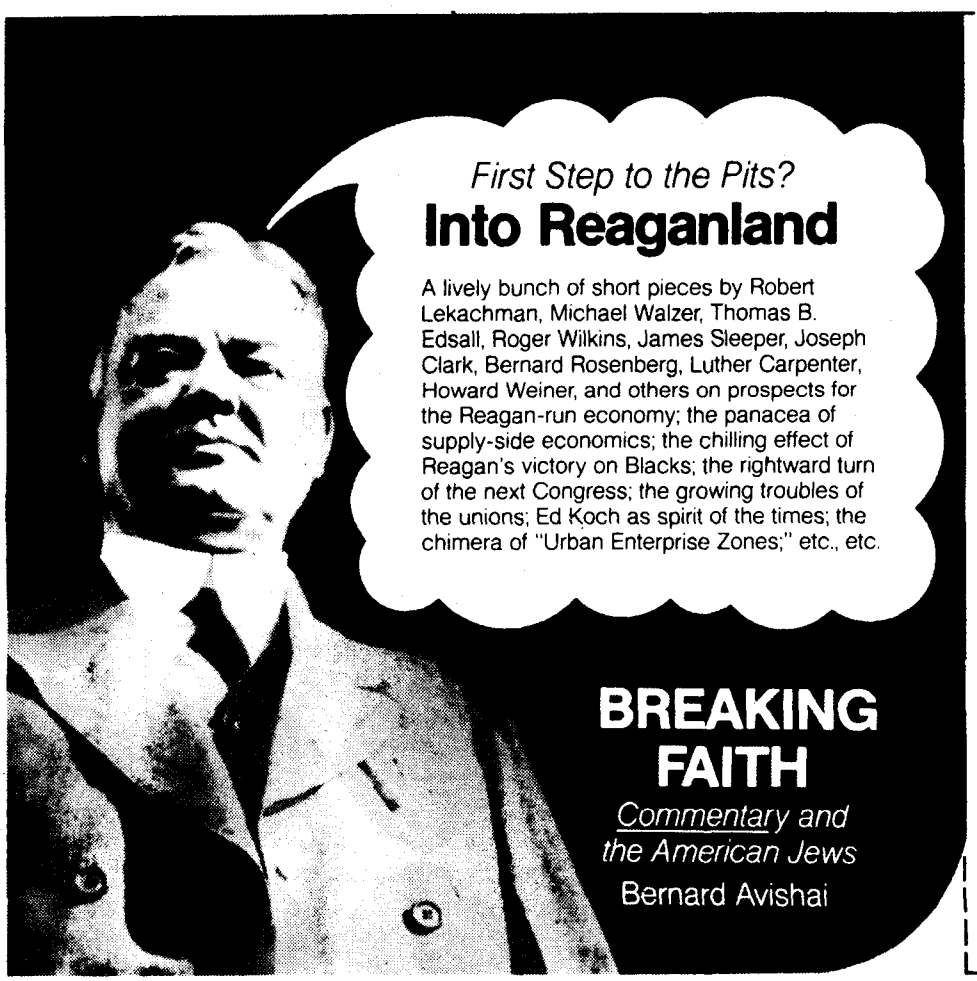
the poet. The third and final section contains essays and reviews, including one on Robert Lowell, a poet whom he admires, and Theodore Roethke.

In his review of Roethke's *Collected Poems* Heaney rebukes an un-named American poet for being too self-conscious about his relationship to a literary tradition and his role as a poet. Heaney's lack of self-consciousness about the poet's role, or his relationship to society, is again connected with the Irish situation. In spite of the well-known struggle that Irish writers have had with the narrow norms of their homeland — a struggle which has often led to exile — none of them expresses the kind of alienation that is a characteristic of much modern poetry. By being Irish the poet has already to a certain extent defined himself against the pressure of an outside, alien force; so a sense of alienation from Irish society or Ireland itself does not become a primary issue. Even in exile the poet carries Ireland with him and is able through its complex experience to illuminate his own.

Heaney's explorations, both in prose and poetry, of the tangled and mingled roots of his culture is in sharp contrast to the kind of primitivism associated with Gary Snyder in America and Ted Hughes in England. There is no straining for effect; there is nothing cerebral about it. His themes are those for which, at another level, people are still killing and dying in the back streets of Belfast slums, and in the narrow roadways of his own parish. For better or for worse they are still a vital part of Ireland's historical experience.

Next issue: SPRING BOOKS

"Prompted by a large dollop of Irish blood and by a feeling that what was happening in Ireland was the most important 'story' a writer could examine at this time, in Great Britain and Ireland, I set about looking for ways of breaking into what, in one of these reports, I call a vicious circle of interlocked problems." So Anthony Bailey, staff writer for the *New Yorker* magazine, states in the foreword to his collection of articles about Ireland, *Acts of Union*. They have appeared in magazines both here and in Great Britain over the last seven years. Bailey's way of breaking into the "vicious circle" is to examine the lives of Irishmen and women who have crossed the sectarian divide in some sense. There is an article on a Protestant headmaster who runs a school on the border of a Catholic ghetto, an interview with Erskine Childer, the late President of Ireland who was a Protestant, a consideration of the difficulties a young Protestant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BREAKING FAITH
Commentary and the American Jews
Bernard Avishai

The Spring/1981 issue of **Dissent** brings a déjà vu look into the Reagan administration by some well-known demand-side observers. **Also** some lively reviews and articles: *Naming Names,* by Murray Hausknecht; *Equal Opportunity and "The Race of Life",* by Isaac Kramnick; *From Holocaust to "Holocaust",* by Claude Lanzmann; *The Corruptions of Science,* by Gerald Cavanaugh; *The Ambiguous Legacy of Eduard Bernstein,* by Henry Pachter.

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man and his Catholic girlfriend must face because of the different backgrounds. Two chapters are devoted to Seamus Heaney, whose metaphors for the current crisis Bailey tends to mistake for explanations. There is also one chapter devoted to a Derry Catholic ghetto and the myriad problems faced by welfare workers there.

Unfortunately, it turns out in the end not to be a very productive way of looking at the Irish crisis. Perhaps this is because the Catholic/Protestant dichotomy is only the symptom of a deeper problem which Bailey does not really address, concerning the historical role of succeeding British governments, and their responsibility for the creation and support of Northern Ireland with all its inherent inequalities. Without taking this seriously into account, Bailey's considerations of why the crisis arose rests heavily on the wearisome notion (beloved by the English liberal intelligentsia and their Anglophilic American counterparts) that the Irish are colorfully irrational, harboring rustic poets and fanatical gunmen, a people in a muddle of ancient passions.

Behind these notions are some disturbing assumptions. In *Acts of Union* Bailey writes that the Irish have a "savage virus" in their blood. He poses what he calls the "basic Irish question" in these terms: "Did frequent invaders and alien settlement make the Irish the sometimes violent people they are, as the President [of Ireland] believes, or did the essentially savage Irish bring out the worst in their conquerors?" When confronted by the large families in the Catholic slums, where unemployment has always been rife, he ponders . . . "does having nothing to do lead to more babies?" (Since when did a mother of ten children have nothing to do?)

His book is replete with such questions, phrased in language as banal and limp as the questions are irrevelant and obtuse. Had they been addressed to, say, the condition of poor black Americans, there would have been outraged reaction — and it would have been deserved. The Irish are unique in Western Europe in being the only nation to experience prolonged and cruel colonialization akin to that which oppressed Third World nations. Bailey's attitudes towards Ireland and the Irish are sometimes revealed as colonial, racist, and quite uncomprehending of the political and historical roots of the so-called "Irish" problem. Such attitudes are common enough among the English, who masquerade them in clichés about quaintness, though—as *Acts of Union* clearly reveals in places—the underlying condescension keeps showing through.

Narrow, splendid work

A FEW GREEN LEAVES

Barbara Pym

E.P. Dutton, $10.95, 250 pp.

Robert Phillips

BARBARA PYM died on January 11 of last year, in a small Oxfordshire village cottage which she had come to share with her sister. At the time of her death, her books were much in demand in her country, and were finding an audience in America. And therein lies a terrible irony.

Between 1950 and 1961, Miss Pym published six novels, including *Excellent Women* (1952), *Less Than Angels* (1955), *A Glass of Blessings* (1958), and *No Fond Return of Love* (1961). But when she presented her next manuscript, it was rejected by no less than twenty publishers. She was dropped, called "out of date." She retreated into silence, presumably not writing, and supporting herself as an assistant editor for the quarterly *Africa*. For sixteen years she published no fiction. Then, in 1977, both Philip Larkin and Lord David Cecil, responding to a poll conducted among literati by the London *Times Literary Supplement*, listed her as "the most underrated writer of this century." Publishers took note, and later that same year a new Pym novel, which she had begun when retirement from the quarterly loomed, appeared. It was titled *Quartet*

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in Autumn. Overnight she found herself a "fashionable" writer.

Since that time most of her earlier books have been reprinted. *Quartet in Autumn* was followed by another new novel, *The Sweet Dove Died* (1978), and now by *A Few Green Leaves* (1980)—a novel completed barely two months before her death. It is a book to be welcomed and savored, but perhaps not without prior acquisition of an appreciation for her other, more major, novels.

"Major" is a peculiar adjective to apply to Miss Pym's books, which are about storms in a teapot. The teapot is usually an Anglican parish, and the comparison to Jane Austen's work has been made often enough. Miss Pym wrote only short novels on narrow subjects: the comforts of religion, the poignancy of living alone, the perpetual quest for usefulness, the limitations of marriageability and marriage.

Yet for all their limitations, her novels are dense with psychological insight and larded with wit. Within the strict conventions of the British social novel she was also highly original. She is one of the few novelists to write of the continuing relationships between middle-aged protagonists and their elderly parents. And, unlike the self-pitying heroines of the novels of Jean Rhys (whose great "comeback" her own career resembles), Pym's spinsters and widows do not pine over their single state. They live alone because they choose to. Either they become "excellent women" like Mildred Lathbury, of the novel bearing that title—loving their neighbors with Christian charity; or they come to love only themselves, like Leonora Eyre of *The Sweet Dove Died*, who concludes,

> when one came to think of it, the only flowers that were really perfect were those, like the peonies that went so well with one's charming room, that possessed the added grace of having been presented to oneself . . .

Mildred and Leonora and Wilmet Forsyth, of *A Glass of Blessings*, are fully-drawn characters whose desires and feelings are highly palpable. In *Quartet in Autumn*, however, Miss Pym began to widen her focus—exploring within approximately the same number of pages the lives of Edwin, Norman, Letty and Marcia, told from four points of view. The result necessarily was less intense. Now, in *A Few Green Leaves*, Miss Pym opens focus even wider. Her intent here is to capture a portrait of an entire English village and the enduring lives and customs there. The result is at once her narrowest and broadest work.

A Few Green Leaves is ambitious. Miss Pym is not concerned merely with contemporary time. The novel is buttressed by flying references to, and a subplot concerning, Druid ruins and an 18th-century country manor. Particular care is taken to contrast life today with what existed on the manor:

> ". . . all that patronage and paternalism or whatever you like to call it has been swept away, and good thing, too."
>
> "Perhaps the people have been swept away too," said her mother.
>
> "Yes — I certainly miss the manor and all it stood for — we haven't got any kind of centre to the village now," said Miss Lee.
>
> "I suppose the clergy and the doctors have taken the place of the gentry," Emma said.

This is highly self-conscious writing. Yet the central heroine, Emma Howick, is an anthropologist, and her sociological concerns become Miss Pym's. Emma has the makings of a typical repressed Pym heroine, her very ordinariness made interesting by her awareness of it. Yet Miss Pym darts from Emma to the rector Tom Dagnall to Dr. Martin Shurbsole to Miss Olive Lee to Graham Pettifer to Dr. Gellibrand to Miss Lickerish to Mrs. Dyer to Adam Prince to Miss Vereker to Isobel Mound to Terry Skate to — well, you get the idea. There are too many tiny pieces shifting into place in this kaleidoscope. Miss Pym does not allow herself to fully realize any of her villagers in the leisurely manner of her earlier novels.

And yet, there is something ingratiating and admirable about this final attempt at the English novel. Miss Pym did not repeat herself. In pitting time present against time past, in parading history before us in the living flesh, the book approaches the daring and conceit of Virginia Woolf's final novel, *Between the Acts*, also set in an English village. There Woolf tried to depict England as it was then, but also to indicate that all Englishmen were members one of another, each a part of the whole, acting different parts but being of the same body. In this respect Barbara Pym's final vision compares with Virginia Woolf's; a striking vision, but an anomaly in the context of the body of her own narrow, splendid work.

In Brief

THE CHEESE AND THE WORMS: THE COSMOS OF A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MILLER *by Carlo Ginzburg, translated by John and Anne Tedeschi, Johns Hopkins Univ., $14, 177pp.*

Losers don't write history books. They don't even leave much documentation for those who do, which is why History seems to some a high kind of imaginative literature, rather than the reliable chronicle of a religious or scientific force. Today many historians fight that bias and try to write books about the losers, or the vast majority that never wins. In the wake of Le Roy Ladurie, Braudel and the whole school of the Annales, and writing with the prophetic fervor of the best Italian Marxists, Carlo Ginzburg has given us a minor classic about an otherwise forgotten loser. *The Cheese and the Worms* recreates the inner and outer worlds of a sixteenth-century miller,

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REVIEWERS

A. J. BEITZINGER *is a professor of government at the University of Notre Dame.*

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ROBERT PHILLIPS's *third collection of poems,* Running on Empty, *will be published in September by Doubleday.*

JOHN AHERN *teaches Italian literature at Stanford University.*

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(Continued from page 285)

Menocchio, twice tried by the Inquisition for heresy and at last, at the insistence of Pope Clement VIII, executed for that "crime." A century ago a less perspicacious historian would have presented Menocchio as a rustic Giordano Bruno, and written a tract against the murderous intolerance of the church. But even if that battle has not been won entirely, the point has been. Ginzburg looks at his miller from a considerably more interesting perspective. While researching another book in a diocesan archive in Udine, north of Venice, he found the complete record of Menocchio's interrogation by the Inquisition. The book he wrote is a complex, canny reading of the examiners' dialogue with their suspect. By carefully noting his every word, they unwittingly provided a loser with documentation. Ginzburg is uniquely well qualified to read this text. His earlier works, especially the as yet untranslated *I Benandanti,* focused on present religion and agricultural cults in the Friuli, relating them to the vast, ancient body of unrecorded beliefs of European farmers. Menocchio's case is a fascinating one because he read, owned and borrowed books. Ginzburg expertly reconstructs his reading, and analyzes its intricate relation with the oral culture lived in. More traditional historians would have tracked Menocchio's deeply felt, articulate and often inconsistent ideas to some bookish source, such as the humanists in nearby Padua. Ginzburg turns to high culture *and* popular culture, whose relationship he describes as symbiotic. He shows how Menocchio would have read (or misread) his learned texts by placing him in the peculiar world of the sixteenth century when the wide diffusion of printed texts permanently altered everybody's ideas about authority, and also allowed oral tradition to emerge, becoming perceptible to those who had lived in its confines so unselfconsciously. Ginzburg happily applies to Gramsci's model of dominant and subordinate classes many of the insights of mainly Anglo-American scholarship on oral and popular culture and folklore. The result is an eloquent minor classic of historical writing, remarkable for the breadth and depth of its range. John and Anne Tedeschi's translation of Ginzburg's precise, lively Italian is exemplary.

JOHN AHERN

Correspondence

(Continued from page 258)

interest in Christian sources. We know that the French publisher Cerf now has 270 volumes in his series, Christian Sources. It is time to begin a review of the sources of Christian social teaching, if we are really to understand it in order to put it into practice.

JOHN DOEBELE

Ireland, too

Staten Island, NY

To the Editors: In J. Bryan Hehir's article, "Mr. Reagan and Catholic Apprehensions" [Feb. 13], he says, "From Seoul to San Salvador, from Poland to Pretoria and from Sao Paulo to Salisbury, the Catholic church, often through its bishops, has been a voice and a force influencing war and peace, human rights and human needs in a world scarred by injustice and oppression."

This is all to the good, but should not Northern Ireland be included among those areas where there is "injustice and oppression"; and has not Cardinal O'Fiaic, Primate of Ireland, spoken out forcefully against the inhuman conditions under which Irish political prisoners have been living? Has not Amnesty International in its, "Mission to Northern Ireland," published June 1978, admonished that there have been human rights violations in the detention centers; that due process is abridged; that there have been instances of brutal treatment of individuals picked up for questioning on suspicion; that defendants were not permitted solicitors during the period in police custody; that a majority of convictions in the non-jury courts are based on confessions; and that maltreatment was undertaken in order to induce defendants to make incriminating statements or confessions.

It is strange that many people of Irish antecedents, religious and lay, interested in civil and human rights in Latin America and elsewhere, seem to avoid including Northern Ireland among areas where there is oppression and a violation of rights. . . .

JOHN BRANIGAN

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Church/worldwatch

(Continued from page 265)

of the political climate in which the arms race is debated. The advice, however, is surely short-sighted. We have lived through and, one hopes, learned from a period when not talking to others was regarded as a sign of political wisdom or strategic determination. The deepest truth of the nuclear age is that adversaries share as common ground the danger of destruction. To refuse to talk about that is not political determination but public deception. The physicians do the political arena a service by opposing the argument that talking to the Soviets is inevitably against our best interests.

The third contribution touches the moral dimension of the arms race. John Paul II said at Hiroshima that "the time has come for our society and especially for the world of science to realize that the future of humanity depends as never before on our collective moral choices!" The complexity and awesome danger of nuclear war is an obstacle to thinking about it in political or personal terms. By specifying the strategic debate in terms of its medical consequences, the physicians may touch the moral consciousness of citizens as a first step toward a more political address to the issues. At Hiroshima the pope called upon scientists to lead the public debate on moral and technological issues. In the United States physicians are a community with a lot of unspent political capital; if they use it in opposition to the arms race, we will all be in their debt.

J. BRYAN HEHIR

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Swelling the ranks

Dear Readers

Last January, we addressed a note to you under the headline, "A Worried Thank You." The "thank you" was meant for the 331 Commonweal Associates who had contributed to the survival and growth of Commonweal during 1980. The "worried" reflected our concern about sharply rising costs—in printing, paper, postage, and most recently in rent. We noted that without the Associates listed in that issue "there would be no *Commonweal* today," and that "without the addition of new names . . . there will be no *Commonweal* in the future."

In the three months since that announcement, many of the 1980 Commonweal Associates have renewed their generous contributions, many among them have increased their contributions, and many new Associates have joined in this effort. To all of them we are deeply grateful.

The best thanks to these loyal supporters, however, would be a dramatic swelling of their ranks. A handful of "political preachers" are riding high today because many sympathizers have provided them with a broad base of financial support. *Commonweal* tries to offer a more informed, complex, and tempered view of the relationship between moral convictions and public affairs; but this view, too, can only get a hearing if enough people support the magazine's struggle to survive and to do the best possible job.

Please add your own generosity to that of the individuals listed here. We ask you to fill out the coupon on the back cover.

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